100 TUTORIALS & TIPS FOR DIGITAL & HANDMADE ART

THE ARTIST'S GUIDE TO

ILLUSTRATION

The ultimate tutorial collection

PHOTOSHOP, ILLUSTRATOR, PENS, PENCILS & MORE

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WELCOME

TO THE ARTIST'S GUIDE TO ILLUSTRATION

LEARN FROM THE WORLD'S BEST ILLUSTRATORS

Welcome to the second in our series of *Artist's Guides*, which provide a wealth of in-depth tutorials and features to help you produce your best art and designs ever. In *The Artist's Guide to Illustration*, many of the world's leading professional artists reveal the techniques and tricks that help them produce the amazing works you'll find in these pages. You'll learn how to master the varied toolsets of Photoshop and Illustrator, and how to combine them with real-world crafts including pens, pencils and paints.

In this book you'll discover the secrets of a huge range of styles from hand-drawn to vector, and from portraits to type art.

To help you complete these tutorials, we've compiled their project files into a handy resource. There's far more than could possibly fit on a CD, so go to *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads* for quick access to the files.

The Artist's Guide to Illustration is your handbook to becoming the best illustrator you can be – so let's get started.

To discover how Alexandra Zutto created this image see page 80.

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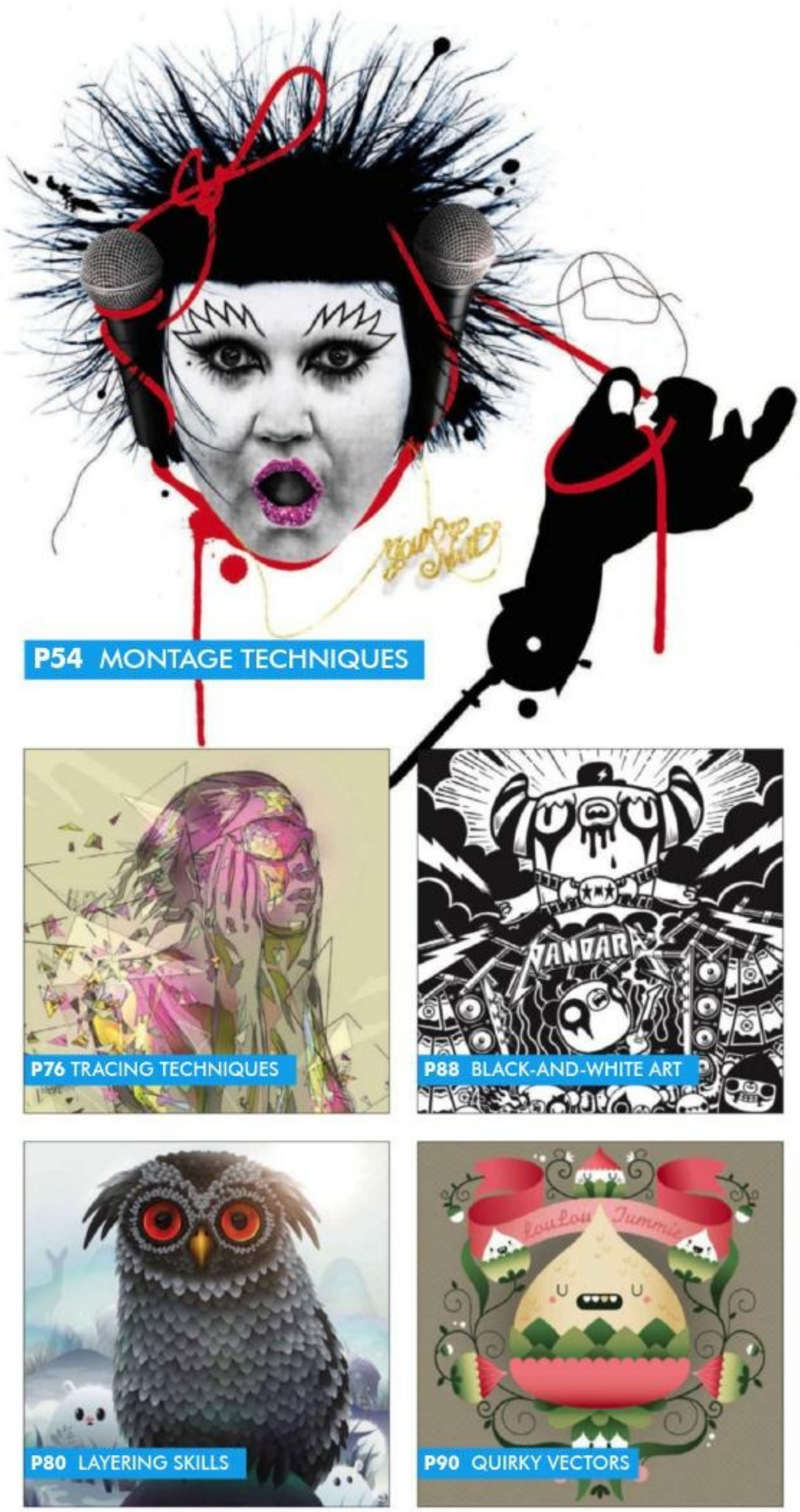

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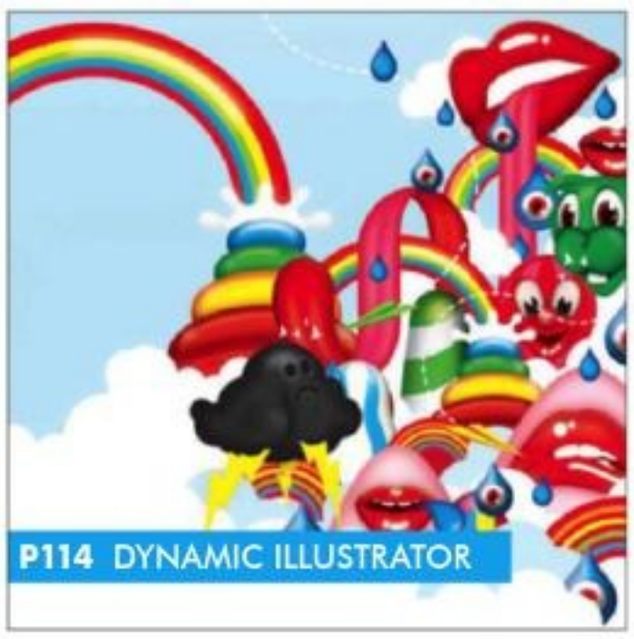

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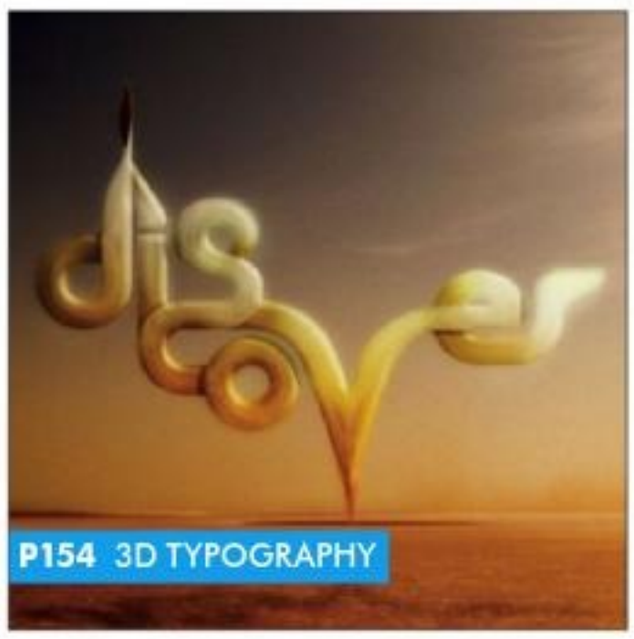

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IDG COMMUNICATIONS

CHAPTER 1

HAND-DRAWN TECHNIQUES

IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS WITH PENS, PENCILS & GRAPHICS TABLETS

"I like to use lines on the face, like an anatomical drawing. But some clients don't like this approach, so I have to limit the amount and weight of the lines – unfortunately," says Andy Macgregor.

Rediscover your love of drawing & see your art take flight. We speak to creatives who have a passion for the hand-fashioned

Top Drawer

Words: Alice Ross

Think back to the first time you wielded a pen, pencil or crayon. Drawing is one of the first ways children express themselves visually. A lucky few go on to hone and perfect their skills over decades, building their whole career on that simple pleasure of drawing a pen across paper – or graphics tablet – and marvelling at the result.

Once upon a time, it was simply impossible to be an artist, without having superb drawing skills. Sketching and drawing were the foundations on which paintings, carvings, frescos and sculptures were built. But that was then. In a digital era, it's easy to avoid ever having to pick up a pencil. Many stellar creative careers rest more on high-tech software and great source imagery, than on traditional art skills.

Why, when you can create dazzling work using Photoshop filters and intricate Illustrator line work, would you dedicate the time and energy to perfecting your drawing? After all, it's a skill that demands minute physical control, an understanding of media (if you're sketching on paper, you need to understand the different ways that pencils, charcoals, inks and crayons work) and endless, endless practice.

> "There is something wonderfully immediate about using a pencil on paper"
>
> Dave Bain

First, because it's fun. The ability to pick up a pen – whether you're working on paper or using a graphics tablet – and let your imagination take flight is exhilarating. The act of drawing has a sense of playfulness that can take artists back to the intense concentration and experimentation of early childhood.

Second, because it's liberating. Artist Dave Bain (*davebain.com*) who creates everything from delicate mixed-media pieces to bright naïve paintings says, "There is something wonderfully immediate about using a pencil on paper, without having to switch on a computer screen or click a mouse."

Above far left
Sam de Buysscher advises, "Never ignore things you find hard to draw. Look at them as a challenge."

Above middle
Dave Bain's illustration for the Queensberry Hotel's Olive Tree Restaurant in Bath.

Above
Gemma Correll's ampersand design drawn for a Flickr photostream follower inspired her to create a letterpressed print of it to sell.

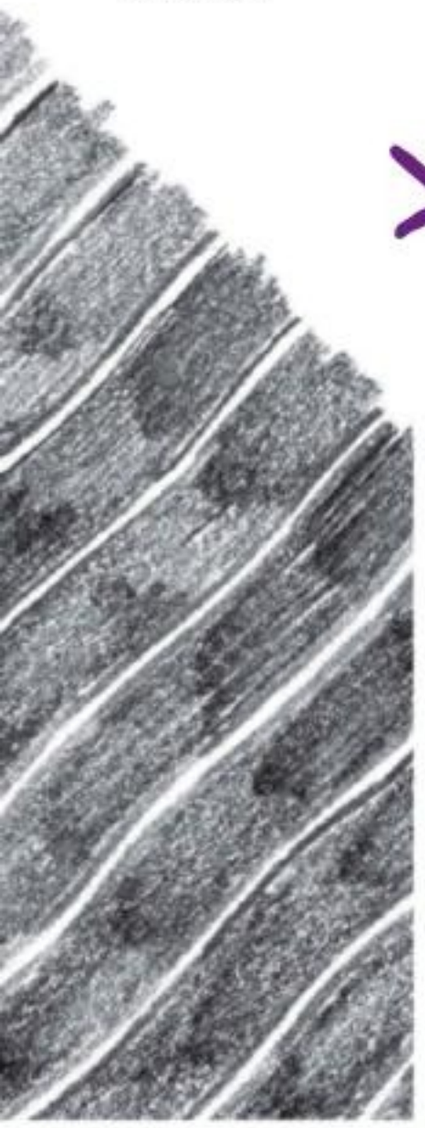
"Unfortunately, approach to

Right Sam Kerr says, "This self-initiated piece was derived from the opinion that Michael Jackson peaked at *Thriller*."

Far right Sam's portrait of John Lennon was part of a series created for a London wine bar. He says, "Each piece has a wine theme. In this case, Lennon's glasses are made using actual red wine marks."

Right Sam uses iPhone app Paint to sketch people on the go. He says, "It's the best practise for drawing portraits to achieve a likeness. You're restricted to what you can do with five brush sizes, a small screen and some fat fingers."

Far right Oliver Barrett's portraits of The Beatles are sold as prints. He says, "Constant learning, experimentation and exploration is the best and most obvious way to get better."



Belgian illustrator Sam de Buysscher, who works under the name Toy Factory, says sketching on paper is liberating, both physically and mentally. "You get more freedom to draw wherever and whenever you want. Nothing is more fun than drawing in a park under a sunny sky. Nature can be your studio – isn't that great?"

There is also the fact that when you draw, even if you're using the very latest graphics tablet, you're tapping into a creative heritage that stretches back over centuries. This gives you an incredible archive of past masters to learn from and a dizzy range of styles and techniques to explore.

"I'm often looking through art books from the past. Classical drawing styles have always fascinated me, whether it's a rough, preliminary sketch, or a fully realised etching," says Dave Bain. These influences can clearly be traced in some of his work, such as the image of two brawling women (see page 9), immaculately rendered in a late-Victorian sketch style.

"Sketching on paper is liberating, both physically and mentally"

Sam de Buysscher

Face facts

Drawing a face is simple enough. Drawing a portrait is another matter entirely. For a lucky few, comes naturally.

Andy Macgregor's portraits of actor Johnny Depp, rapper Common and others have appeared in many magazines. He says, "Portraits are my forte. As long as the reference image is of reasonable quality, it's pretty easy to achieve a likeness."

"Unfortunately, there is no fail-safe approach to capturing a likeness," says Sam Kerr, whose illustrations have featured rock stars, politicians and Osama Bin Laden. "I don't get it right all of the time. Some people are harder to draw than others. I've managed to make a very pretty friend look a little mannish on several occasions."

His advice is, "Make sure you really look at your subject. Get to know their face before you draw it."

Sam adds that the best portraits go beyond mere facial features. "I love the challenge of capturing not only a likeness, but also something of the person's character."

Oliver Barrett's portraits of jazz greats and The Beatles have been made into poster series. He says, "I find relaxing and trying to get a likeness in the early stages of the drawing helps. I've often overworked eyes or lips, then not got the instant recognition that I'm after. If it's not working, I will usually just erase the problem area and start over."

Left "I like to draw quickly sometimes, which means you have to sacrifice accuracy for a more energetic, looser sketch. This has its own unique quality to it," says Andy Macgregor.

Honing your drawing skills doesn't have to mean turning your back on digital art. Many creatives find the two work perfectly, hand in hand, offering the chance to combine the spontaneous feel of sketches with the flexibility of digital working and the all-important **Cmd/Ctrl + Z**.

Mixing it up

Illustrator Sam Kerr's works (*debutart.com/artist/sam-kerr*) combine beautifully observed drawings and paintings with crisp vector images.

"Hand-drawn stuff is very final. Once it's done, you've got to be happy with it, or start again," he says. "Combining digital [elements] allows room for adjustment within your image. In the same manner, the graphic elements allow me to be more creative with ideas as drawing in detail from photographs can have its restrictions."

Andy Macgregor's (*andymacgregor.com*) portraits and illustrations have appeared in *The Guardian* and *GQ*. He says integrating hand drawings with software is especially useful when working for clients.

"It gives me the freedom I need to produce exactly what is asked of me. Time lines are very tight and clients tend to change their minds a lot, so I have to be able to amend the illustration quickly and easily."

He adds, "It also means I can experiment and find the best solution to the problem."

Dave Bain says, "I sometimes use Photoshop to manipulate the drawing in ways that are not achievable or time-consuming to accomplish non-digitally. An example is using several scanned-in textures I've created using experimental techniques. I'll then tweak these using the Contrast and Levels settings, before incorporating them into artwork I've drawn out."

Meanwhile, other artists work entirely digitally, using techniques adopted wholesale from hand drawing. Oliver Barrett (*oliverbarrett.com*) combines his day job at US graphic design and branding agency Go Media with a sideline in lush portraits of musicians and other luminaries. He says his graphics tablet, rather than pen or pencil, is his key creative tool.

Playtime with Toy Factory

"I needed more dynamic characters. That is when I started sketching again". Sam de Buysscher

As the name of his one-man studio, Toy Factory, suggests, Belgian illustrator Sam de Buysscher's work is playful and slightly kitsch. It draws on the 1940s and 50s to create bright, fun works filled with robots, zeppelins and monsters. A late bloomer to hand drawing, Antwerp-based Sam admits this added a new lease of life to his work.

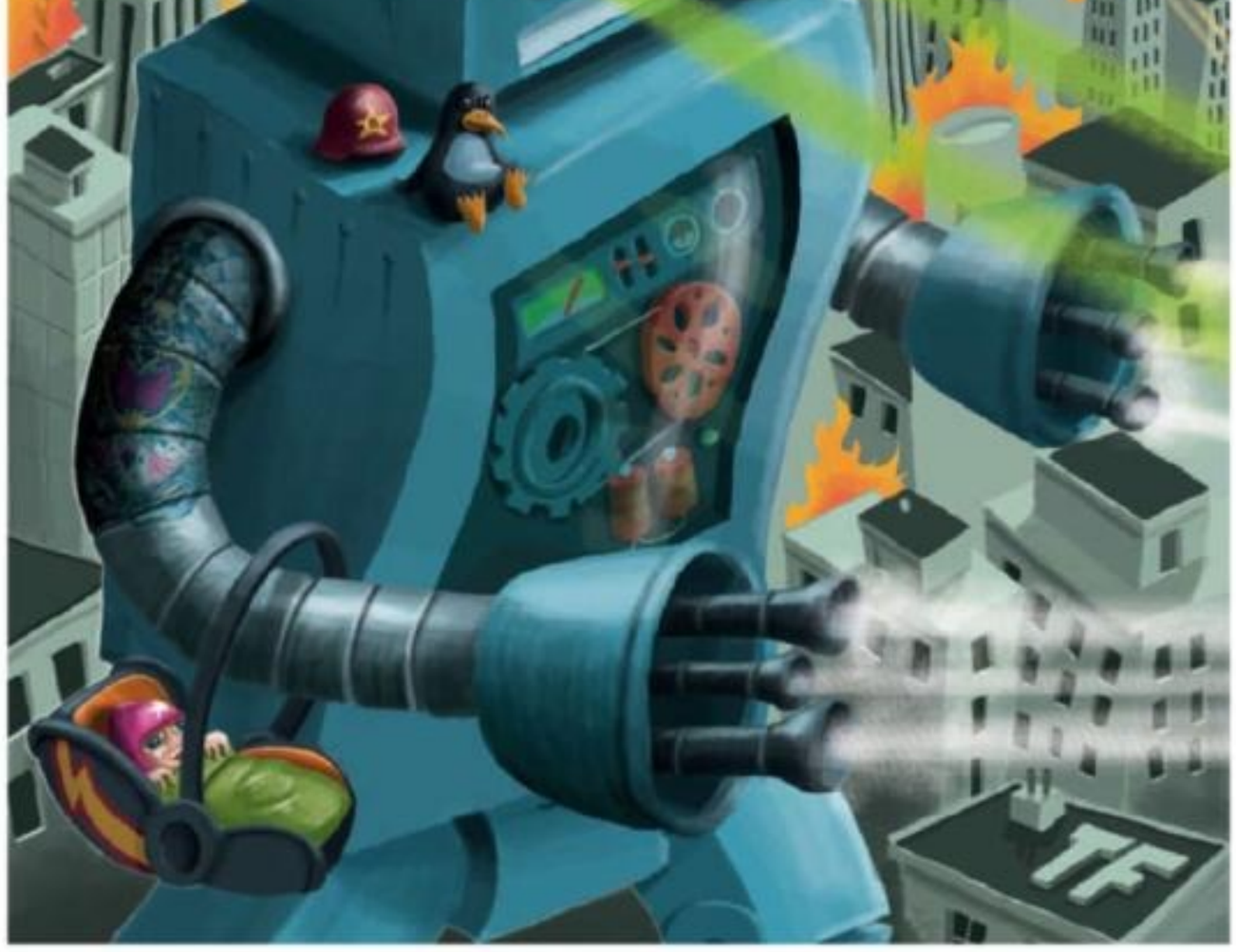
"In the beginning, I worked directly in Illustrator – no sketching, no scanning, just my mouse and Mac. Illustrator's borders are wide, but I wanted to create a more 'trashy' style; I needed more dynamic characters. That's when I started sketching again, and rediscovered my love for drawing. It has taken my work to another level."

Sketching has quickly become the starting point for almost all his images. "You get a whole other look to your work when you first make sketches. When I'm creating new characters and need to place them in different positions, it's handy to draw them first – you get a clearer image."

For Sam, rediscovering drawing is part of an ongoing urge to experiment. "It's part of my freedom and not getting stuck in a specific style."

He adds, "Lately I've started to get invitations for live drawing sessions, something I would never have done a few years ago."

toyfactory.be



Above Sam de Buysscher says, "Robots are fun to draw. They always have kind of magic and people keep on loving them."

Right AtomBoy is a character created by Sam. "At the moment I'm totally in love with my AtomBoy character," he says. "I could go on drawing it forever. It's a lovely mixture of characters and objects."

Oliver explains, "Usually I will do a rough thumbnail sketch, in order to get a basic idea of what the composition will be. From there, it depends on the project. There's always a lot of graphics tablet work, but occasionally I do work on paper extensively and then scan it in. After that, I may use scanned in textures and layering techniques to achieve the result I'm after."

In contrast, award-winning illustrator Gemma Correll (*gemmacorrell.com*) works predominantly on paper. "It's all hand drawn," she says of her blocky, childlike illustration style. "I sometimes add colour digitally, but the line work is always done by hand. I have tried drawing with my graphics tablet but it didn't really work for me – the line quality wasn't right."

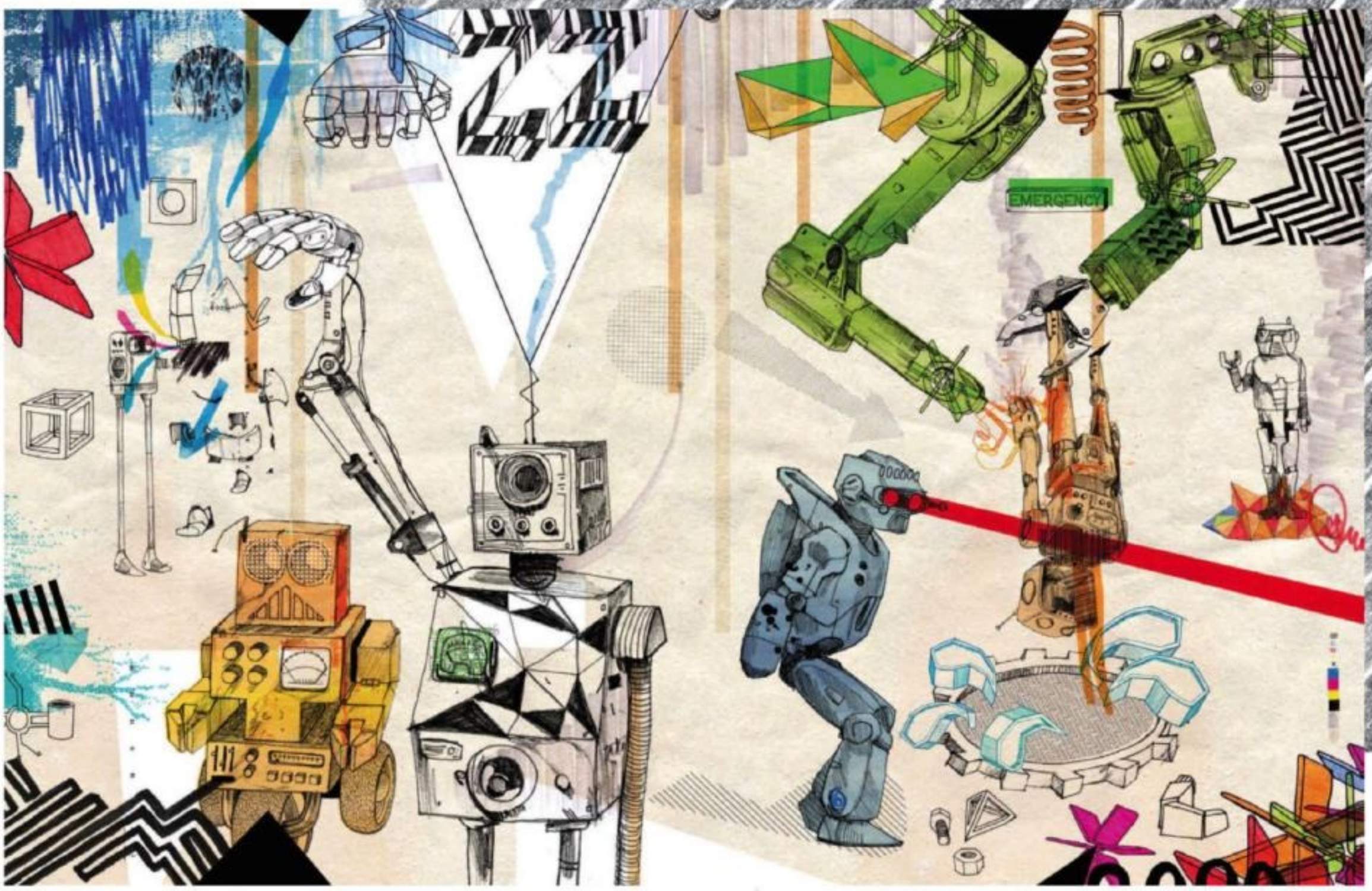
She continues, "I enjoy the freedom of mark making and experimenting with media. I find felt pens and markers easy to use. If I make mistakes, I might erase them later using Photoshop – or I might leave them in. Sometimes think mistakes add to the character of an illustration."

Learning to draw can be a long, hard process – and it's one that's never finished. Even the most skilled artists have objects they struggle to draw. But all this can be overcome with two simple techniques: observation and practice.

Be quick on the draw

Dave Bain claims the secret is to keep drawing and looking. "Wherever I am, if I have the materials to do it, I'll try to do a drawing," he says. "Even if I'm not quite in the mood or the final result is weak, just that process of drawing keeps me focused and improves my ability."

Dave adds that he sketches a lot when he's out and about. "If I'm drawing in public I tend to look at the people



and not at the drawing page. I do fast, quick drawings that give me an impression of the movement of the person, rather than spot-on accuracy."

He says these sketches often get recycled into his other work. "I find that when I draw, all kinds of ideas flood into my mind about how that drawing can be used, or other ideas that I'd like to try out."

Andy Macgregor says, "I try to use the old-fashioned [method of] looking at the reference constantly, ghosting in the shape of whatever it is I'm drawing, then running the final line on top."

He continues, "It's most definitely a practice thing, but you should never be afraid to just draw what you see and welcome a sense of naïvety to your work."

Andy admits finding drawing most challenging when he can't base his drawings on observation.

"The most difficult thing to draw is something you have to pluck out of your mind. Sometimes, there's no reference for what you're asked to draw." He says in these situations you have to completely rely on your common sense and give way to trial and error.

While Andy can draw some things without observing them, Sam Kerr finds others extremely challenging.

"Don't ever ask me to draw a cow from memory," he says. "However, like with anything that you might struggle to draw, the best approach is to keep at it, until you get it right."

As with any artistic discipline, constantly experimenting with materials and techniques is an essential part of honing your skills and developing your style. Indeed, Andy reveals one of the simplest tricks is also one of the most effective.

"Be confident in your own ability," he says. "Everybody is different. You've got to nurture the skills you have and be confident doing it."

Above
Andy Macgregor's *El Bot* for *El Bosque*, a Colombian illustration magazine. "Everything is hand-drawn first, then all other elements are added separately – paint washes, found paper scans and mark making."

Right *The Guardian* commissioned this piece from Sam Kerr. "The column it supported spoke of Gordon Brown's dual personality, comparing him to Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde."

Handy advice

Ask any 10 artists what they find hardest to draw, and at least seven of them will say 'hands'. With their tricky proportions and all that detail, they're certainly fiddly. But how to get them right?

"Draw them larger and bonier than usual – like Egon Schiele," says Andy Macgregor, referring to the Austrian 20th-Century painter. "Naturally, people tend to draw hands too small and make them look like a plastic doll's – not a good look."

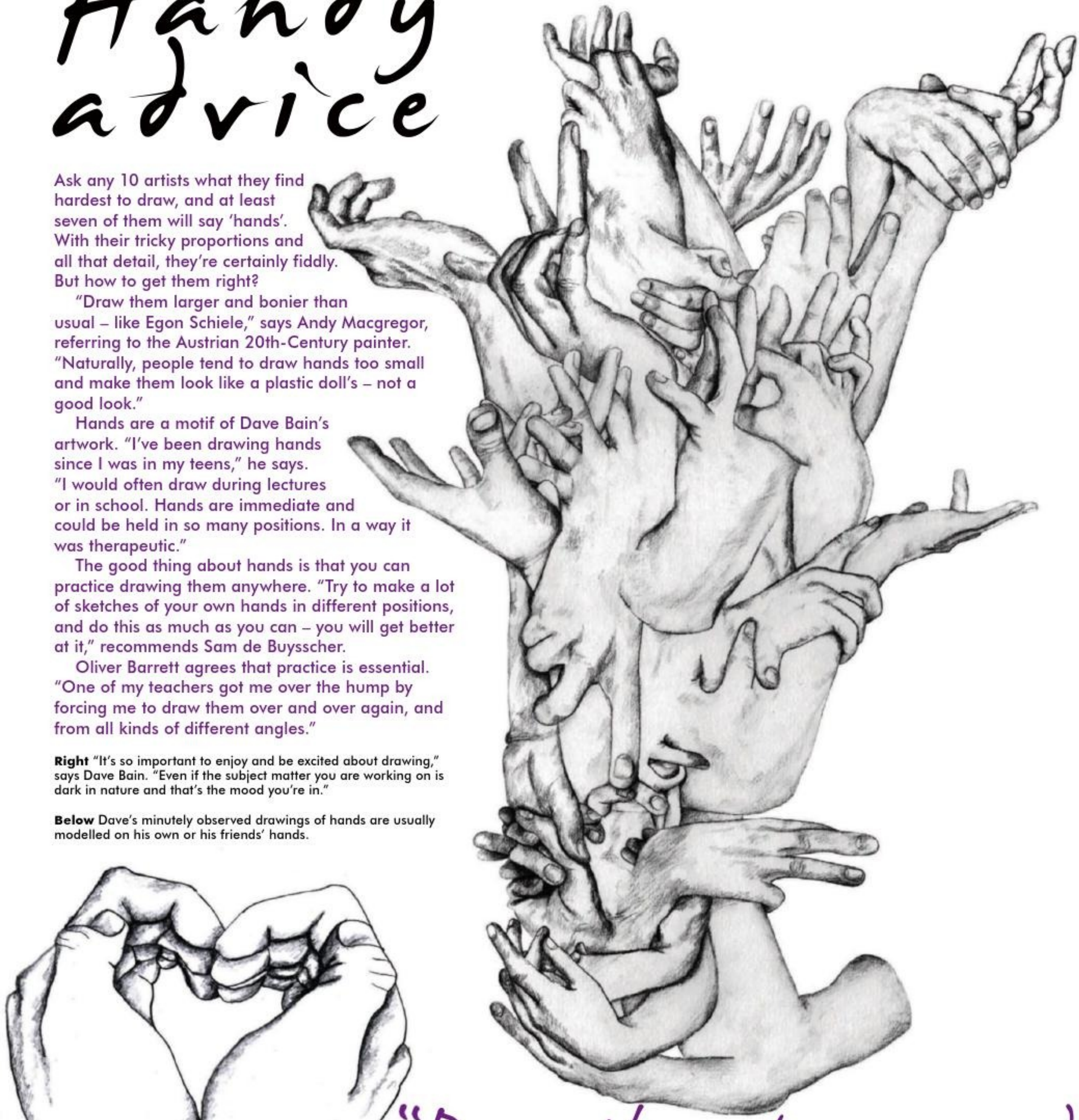
Hands are a motif of Dave Bain's artwork. "I've been drawing hands since I was in my teens," he says. "I would often draw during lectures or in school. Hands are immediate and could be held in so many positions. In a way it was therapeutic."

The good thing about hands is that you can practice drawing them anywhere. "Try to make a lot of sketches of your own hands in different positions, and do this as much as you can – you will get better at it," recommends Sam de Buysscher.

Oliver Barrett agrees that practice is essential. "One of my teachers got me over the hump by forcing me to draw them over and over again, and from all kinds of different angles."

Right "It's so important to enjoy and be excited about drawing," says Dave Bain. "Even if the subject matter you are working on is dark in nature and that's the mood you're in."

Below Dave's minutely observed drawings of hands are usually modelled on his own or his friends' hands.



"Draw them larger and bonier than usual – like Egon Schiele"

Andy Macgregor

The girl who draws

"I find drawing helps me articulate my thoughts and ideas. I'm quite an introverted person, and I can't always get my point across in conversation or debate. But as soon as I draw something, it starts to make sense – to me, at least," explains Gemma Correll.

Recently, Gemma's drawings have been making sense to a much wider audience. The London-based artist won an ADC Young Guns award in September, handed out by the prestigious US organisation, the Art Directors' Club, to what it considers to be the world's most promising young creatives. She has worked for a variety of clients, including high-fashion brand Hermés and a wealth of magazines and newspapers. She's also a member of the Girls Who Draw collective.

Gemma says that her style has evolved naturally. "My drawing has improved through many hours of practice. I draw every day and keep sketchbooks. I don't experiment with my style much, but I do try to experiment with media."

She does like to take something that she's really familiar with drawing, then drilling down into the detail. "When I'm comfortable with drawing the basic shape of something – as I am with cats, I can have more fun experimenting with the details, such as the expression, marking, outfit and so on."

gemmacorrell.com

TUESDAY, JULY the 13th
BREAKFAST
POTATO CAKES, MUSHROOMS, TOMATO & EGG (NO HAGGIS BLACK PUDDING OR SAUSAGE)
COFFEE #1
ANTHONY HAD THE "SCOTTISH BREAKFAST" WITHOUT ANY OF THE SCOTTISH BITS.
TRAIN to EDINBURGH
pastries
MR P. SEEMS TO BE WELCOME IN MOST PLACES HERE.
I DON'T THINK I'M A FAN OF PUGS
LITTLE GIRL AT THE CAFÉ
COFFEE #2 AT A LOVELY SWEDISH CAFÉ
MA, CHE BELLO!
EXCITED ITALIAN GIRLS
COFFEE #3
MET MY FRIEND KELLY.
(then BACK TO NORTH BERWICK.)
ICED latté
BOTTLE
LARGE BOTTLE
'WEE BRU'
CAN
LARGE CAN
THE MANY SIZES OF IRN BRU
SCOTLAND'S favourite SUGAR-LADEN FIZZY DRINK!
WEDNESDAY, JULY the 14th
WOKE UP TO RAIN.
JUST LIKE ALL OF MY CHILDHOOD SUMMER HOLIDAYS IN SCOTLAND!
DADDY, CAN WE GO BACK TO THE HOTEL?
NO, WE'RE GOING TO CLIMB THAT MOUNTAIN.
SO SPENT THE DAY INDOORS READING & DRAWING.
(NO WI-FI HERE! eek!)
BEEP!
BEEP!
FLAP FLAP
FUCKS SAKES
TRASHY FREE-WITH MAGAZINE Book
I HEART NEW YORK
& SETTING THE FIRE ALARM OFF EVERYTIME WE COOKED

Above "Sometimes I'll see something that will spark an idea in my head – in this case, it was a dog sniffing another dog's bum," says Gemma Correll. "I try to look for the humour in everyday situations."

Left "I keep these diaries every day; it's a way of chronicling my life," says Gemma. "My life is really quite dull, but readers tell me this mundanity makes the diaries interesting to read, paradoxically."

Project briefs

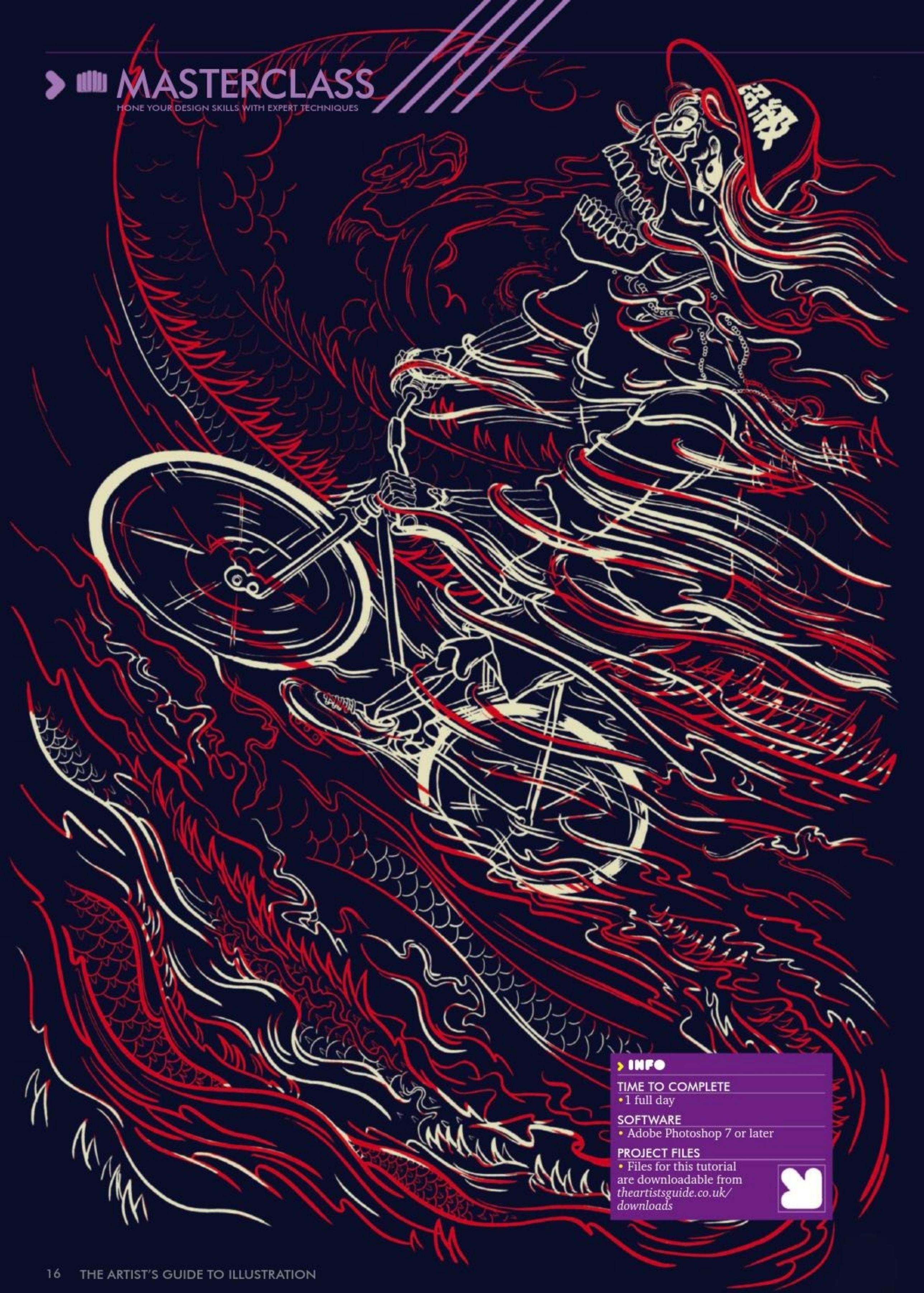
We asked our interviewees to create a brief to inspire you to try something new and develop your drawing skills further. Here's what they suggested:

- Pick a hard thing to draw and reduce it to simple shapes. Put it aside, then repeat from a different angle. Repeat the process again; eventually the item will become easier to capture.
- Draw a quick self-portrait every night for a week. Do it from the same angle each time and see how your approach and the results change.
- Draw your favourite animal doing something in a human way. This forces you to think about its anatomy to make the action look possible.
- Change things about: try drawing with your left hand (or right, if you're left-handed). This forces your brain to focus in a different way on how it places lines.
- Have a sketch-off: with a friend, pick an object and do a 10-minute drawing of it. Swap drawings and critique – it's surprising how many tricks you'll pick up.

> "...drawing helps me to articulate my thoughts and ideas"...
>
> Gemma Correll

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES



> INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 1 full day

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop 7 or later

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> LEARN DRAWING SKILLS

Hand-crafted brush pen tricks

Mixing real-world and digital craftmanship using brush strokes

On this tutorial, artist Ollie Munden takes you through the process of creating his three-colour painting, *Chasing The Dragon*, through a mix of Photoshop and pencil techniques. First off you'll mock up what you want to create using photography, then create a pencil drawing from that. Taking your drawing, you'll retrace this by hand with a Brush Pen, then transform it into a slick-looking, three-colour digital artwork.

The tutorial also shows you how to colour your finished artwork using a mixture of digital and hand-drawn techniques.

These skills can be used to produce your own unique pieces of artwork with a fluid, yet bold graphic style.

TIP SEPARATE YOUR ELEMENTS

I tend to draw elements of the final design separately. This allows me to compose individual scans into one image very easily and takes some pressure off making mistakes in a drawing. Also, Photoshop makes it very easy to correct mistakes in your drawings. So if you do mess up some line work on paper, don't worry – it's probably fixable in the digital world.

"Roughing areas out loosely helps guide your drawing. Once you have completed this, make a print-out of your composition; A3 is a good size to draw on"

STEP 01 To begin this piece, I gathered a variety of photos for reference. The main photo of the cyclist really inspired me as I liked the angle from which it was taken. When doing your own new artworks, keep your eyes peeled for photos that have strong visual qualities, good angles, nice lighting and are of high resolution.

To begin, open *CTD_PHOTOCOMP.psd* (which can be found in the project files). If you'd prefer to create your own skeletal cyclist, find your own photos and comp them together to make your own unique rider.

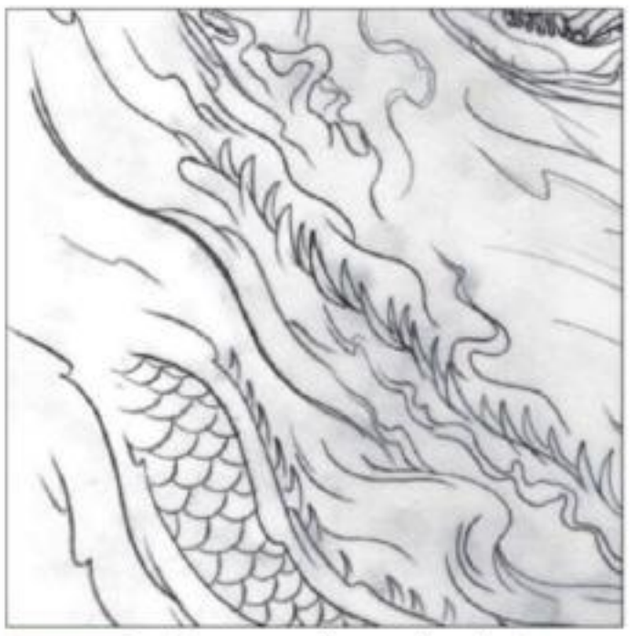
The Polygonal Lasso tool, plus the Warp and Distort transform tools come in very useful for this type of task.

STEP 02 Using the Pen tool, draw the red curved shapes. Roughing areas out like this loosely helps guide your drawing. Once you have completed this, make a print-out of your composition; A3 is a good size to draw on. If you only have an A4 printer, print each side of the composition and tape them together.

STEP 03 Using a pencil or fine liner – whichever you prefer to draw with, begin sketching out using the mock-up of the skeleton's torso and the bike. I added in the skeletal hands, arms and legs without reference. If you feel more comfortable tracing those two, just add them to your *CTD_PHOTOCOMP.psd* file and reprint.

Look at the finished artwork and note the flowing lines; try to draw these in by hand, or if you find it easier, add them using the Pen tool in Photoshop, then trace them. I tried to break up the torso with these lines, which is a very Japanese technique.

If you'd prefer to concentrate on the digital part of this tutorial, print out *CTD_SKETCH.psd* from the project files and skip to Step 6.



STEP 04 Once you have sketched out the skeleton and bike, it's time to really go to town on the flow of the piece. Movement is often something I try to capture in my work. When drawing the flowing lines, keep it very loose. Don't be too precious as it doesn't matter if your piece turns out differently to mine – in fact it would be better.

The piece is entitled *Chasing the Dragon*. You will notice I have woven elements on the dragon's body, in amongst the flowing lines. Using the final art as your reference, add this to your sketch.

STEP 05 Once you have a complete sketch that matches the final art as closely as possible, scan it in. Tidy up the sketch to get clean lines in Photoshop by first adjusting the Levels (**Image > Adjustments > Levels**). Use the Dodge tool set to Highlights, and with an Exposure of around 20%. Adjust this value according to how much you need to lighten certain areas.

STEP 06 It's now time to print out your artwork once more and make your final drawing. For this I used a brush pen, available from good art stores or direct from the likes of Faber Castell (*faber-castell.co.uk*). These have flexible nibs and give a really nice flowing line, perfect for what we are trying to achieve in this illustration.

For some smaller areas of detail – especially around the skeleton's eyes and in his hair, I used a fine liner as this helped achieve a very controlled pen stroke.

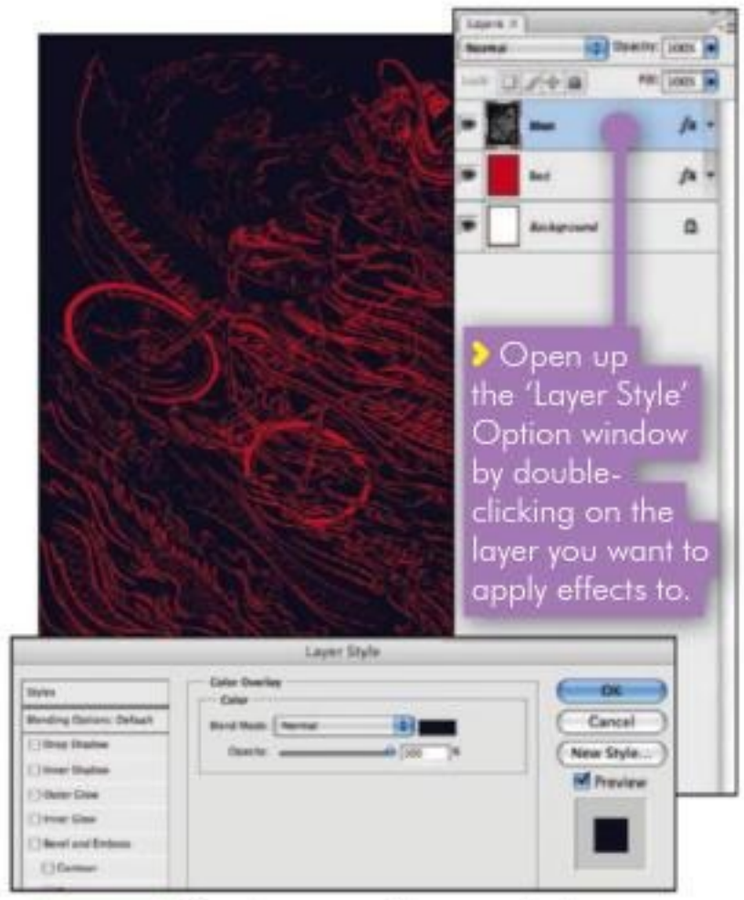
Using both of the pens suggested, go about making a detailed version of the sketch you have printed out. Try and really express some of the lines, especially in those lines that are showing movement.

STEP 07 Scan and tidy up your ink drawing, as you did with your pencil sketch in Step 5. This should take a little less work as the contrast between the darkness of the pen and lightness of the paper is greater. Level adjustments (**Image > Adjustments > Levels**) can prove to be very effective here.

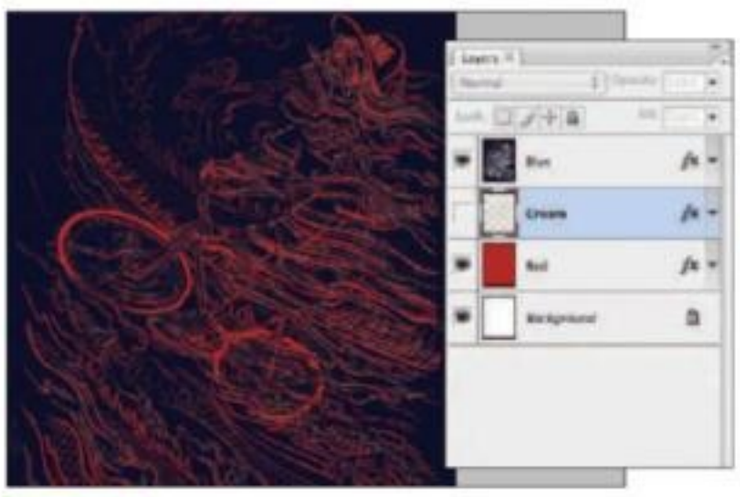
STEP 08 Now that you have solid black lines and solid white base, you need to invert the entire image (**Image > Adjustments > Invert**).

This piece uses a traditional Japanese-style colour palette, with the baseline work colour being red. To achieve this we need to remove the white from the 'Artwork' layer, so that we can put a solid red layer behind it. Double-click your main 'Artwork' layer in your Layers panel. Adjust the This Layer: gradient slider at the bottom of the Layer Style dialog, so that the right-hand (white) slider is set to around 245. This removes any white from the image. Hit OK.

Create a new layer and leave it blank. Merge it with the 'Artwork' layer. This allows you to colour the black areas of the image using a Layer Style – I'm not really sure why this works, but it does, so roll with it.


Open up the 'Layer Style' Option window by double-clicking on the layer you want to apply effects to.
Layer Style
OK
Cancel
New Style...
Preview

STEP 09 Create a new layer called 'Red', then hit **Select > All** (or **Cmd/Ctrl + A**). Fill this layer with a similar red to the one used in the final illustration. I've use **Layer Style > Color Overlay** to do this. Arrange the 'Red' layer so that it's beneath the 'Artwork' layer. Using Color Overlay again, make the 'Artwork' layer blue and rename this layer 'Blue'.



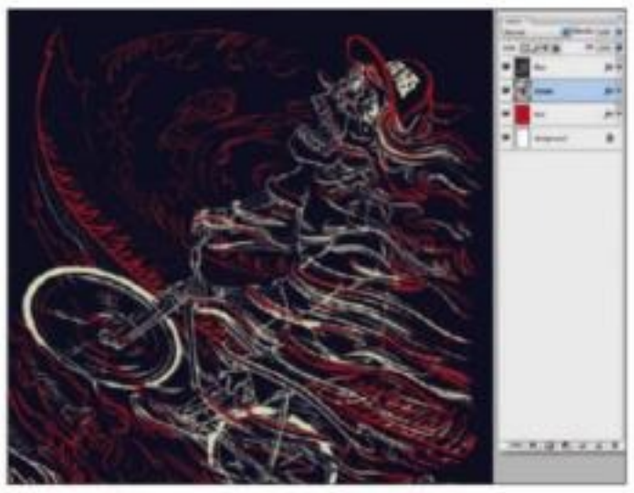
STEP 10 I'm using cream as the highlight colour in this illustration. I chose not to use white as cream seemed to give it a slightly more authentic Japanese feel. This is what I was trying to achieve – a modern illustration that takes reference from Japanese artwork.

Select the Lasso tool and begin picking out the areas that appear as cream in the final illustration. Remember you are highlighting areas that you want to stand out, for example, the skeleton's head and the bike.

If you have a graphics tablet handy, it could prove very useful at this stage.

TIP BLENDING MULTIPLE DRAWINGS

The Multiply blending mode can be really useful if you are piecing together multiple drawings. It allows you to see through a layer whilst maintaining the darker areas – such as line work. This enables you to lay one drawing on top of another to ensure they line up perfectly.



STEP 11 To give the cream colouring the same fluidity as the line work itself, use your brush pen. First establish which areas are to be highlighted using Photoshop's Lasso tools. To do this, select these areas, create a new layer (name it 'Cream') and fill it with a cream colour using a 'Colour Overlay' layer style. Print out the image to trace the area that is to be highlighted, using the same brush pen. You can colour the strokes cream later.

STEP 12 Using tracing paper and the black Brush Pen, trace in the area of Cream highlights, as with the line work. Remember to give the lines nice flow and energy, so they appear a similar style to the lines themselves.

Once all the cream areas are covered with black ink, scan it in and clean it up using the Dodge tool and the Levels command.

STEP 13 Once again, double-click on the 'Artwork' layer to open the Layer Style dialog. Using the This Layer: gradient slider, remove the white from the image. Hit OK. Create a new layer and merge the two together. You can now apply a cream 'Color Overlay' to this layer.

STEP 14 Next, drag the 'Cream' layer onto your main artwork document and arrange it beneath the 'Blue' layer. Line it up as you intend the highlights to appear. You may need to zoom in and tidy up some areas with the Pen tool by selecting these areas and either adding more cream, or removing bits that don't work.

STEP 15 To complete this image, I played around with different variations on the eyes. I tried filling them with cream and red. I also tried different variations with the pupils – highlighted with red, or not highlighted at all. In the end, I felt simple was best – as it often is – and went with a flat cream fill.

This variation made the eyes stand out the most, drawing you to them and his face. Hence, this helps you instantly recognise that the subject of the artwork is a skeleton on a bike.

STEP 16 And that's it: the tutorial is complete. Marvel in the glory of the piece, add any other elements you wish, or maybe try other colour variations.

I think it looks kind of cool in green and off-white. ■

PROFILE OLLIE MUNDEN

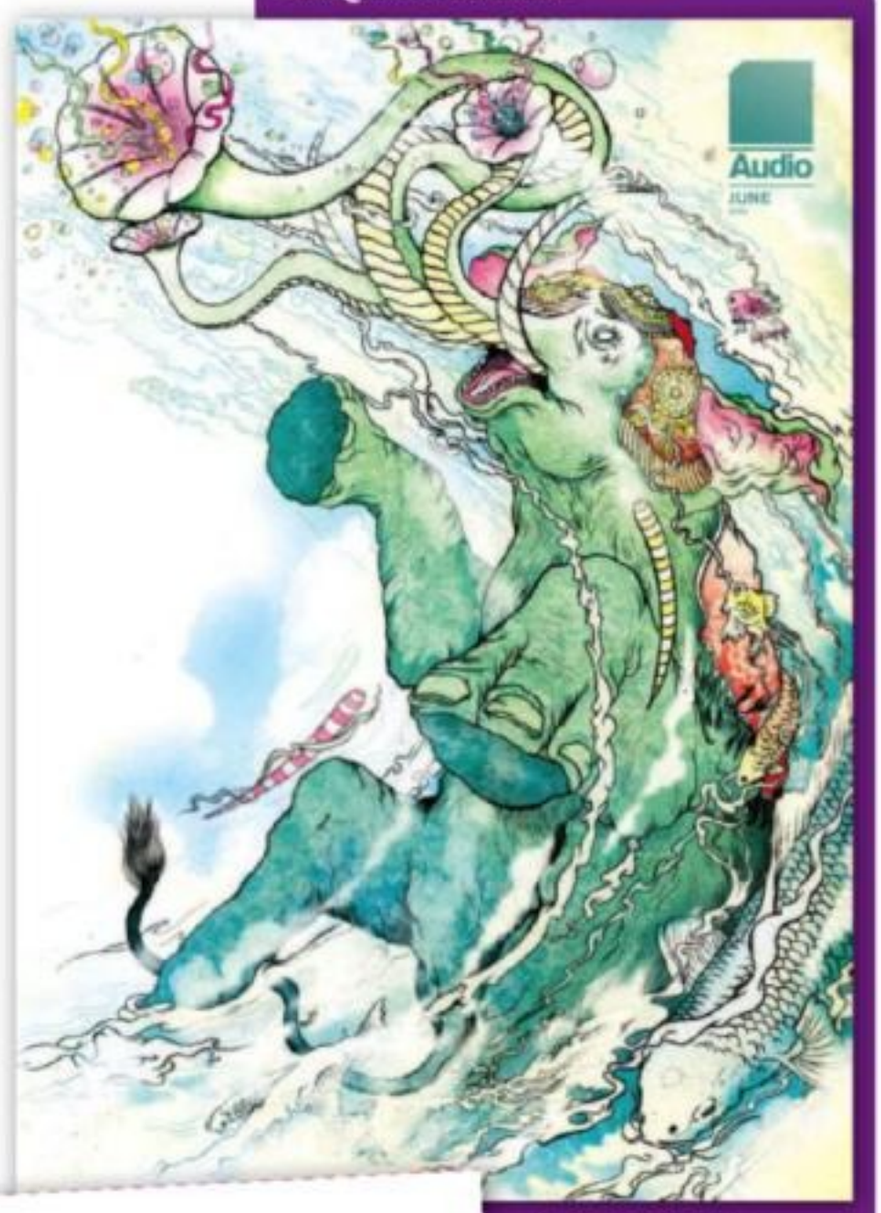
Ollie Munden, aka Megamunden, combines nature's creatures, tattoo design, 1980s skate graphics and an essence of the Far East to create his beautiful concoctions.

As comfortable painting large scale murals as he is illustrating for advertising or publishing, it has been hard to escape Ollie's drawings over recent years. British Airways, Havaianas, Nike, Toshiba, Vodafone, Penguin and *New Scientist* are just a few of the many who have fallen for his distinctive creations.

Alongside commercial commissions, Ollie is finding more and more that he is being commissioned to design tattoos for private clients.

CONTACT

- *megamunden.com*



Above This piece was commissioned by FilthyMedia for the pull-out promo poster and flyer for Audio, a nightclub in Brighton. **Left** *Latitude* was commissioned by Unlimited Supply and used on the merchandise at 2010's Latitude Music Festival. "I am very happy with the simple colouring," says Ollie, "which is complimented by the intense detail of the line work."

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 10-12 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> LEARN TATTOO ILLUSTRATION

Master creative drawing techniques

Discover how Illustrator's Blob Brush tool and a graphics tablet can transform your art

Want to produce clean and detailed line work but with a hand drawn edge? Not sure whether to use the Pen tool in Illustrator or a tablet in Photoshop?

With his stunning tattoo-style designs, digital illustrator and 'part-time thrasher' Chris Parks has all the answers and more in this tutorial.

You'll be introduced to Illustrator's pressure sensitive 'Blob Brush' and you'll learn some techniques for adding quick colour and detailed depth. You'll also pick up some good tips on workflow and how to add detail by creating separate graphics and duplicating them to save time without sacrificing quality.

STEP 01 To get started, you'll need a healthy dose of inspiration, a pencil and a blank sheet of paper. *Death Goddess* was inspired by Mexico's day of the dead celebrations, Thai and Tibetan imagery, along with my own style and interpretation. If you don't feel like sketching, you can find my original sketch file (*sketch.jpg*) in the project files.

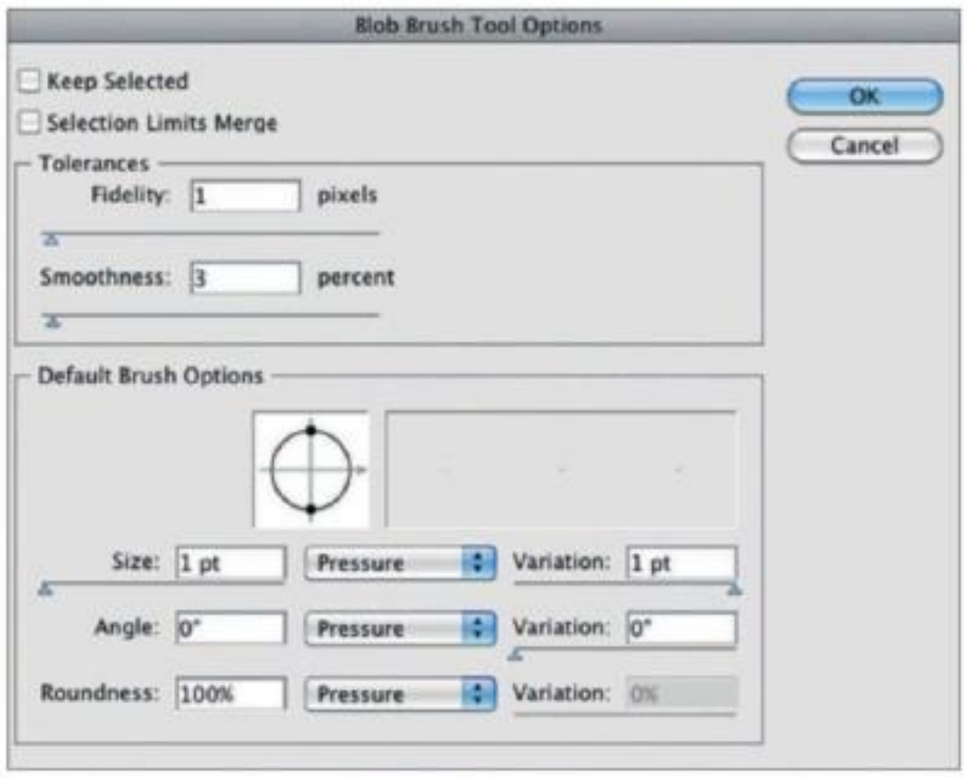
STEP 02 When you've got a good, rough sketch of your idea, scan it in and save it as a grayscale at 300dpi. You can adjust the contrast levels of your sketch in Photoshop to make sure it looks clean enough to be used as a reference for the line work.

THE REFLECT TOOL

> I like to save time whenever possible, so I designed the *Death Goddess* as a symmetrical drawing so that I would only have to draw half of it. Use the reflect tool and hold down option to flip and duplicate elements whenever you can.

STEP 03 In Illustrator, open a new document and set it up as RGB at 16 x 24 inches. Then go to **File > Place** to insert your sketch image onto your art board.

STEP 04 Once you've placed your image, centre it on the art board and scale it up to match the art board. With the image still selected, change its colour in the colour palette to Red – 110; Green – 205; Blue – 245 so that the image has a cyan colour to it. Lock its layer and click New Layer in the Layers palette.



STEP 05 Next, start inking the image up with your pressure sensitive tablet. Double click the Blob Brush in the tool palette menu and set it up as shown in the screenshot. Set the colour to black using the colour palette.

BREAK IT DOWN

› Break down your drawing into individual elements. It's a lot easier to tackle one piece at a time and give it your full attention rather than trying to illustrate the entire image as a whole.

STEP 06 The Blob Brush is an amazing tool added to Illustrator CS4. If you haven't used it before, I'd recommend playing around with it a bit and practice getting a nice, consistent, thin-to-thick-line. It's much smoother than Photoshop's Brush tool and retains a vector-style line quality.

STEP 07 After you are comfortable with the Blob Brush, choose an area to begin attacking. You can save time by starting with elements you can single out and duplicate, like the fire and flower elements. Don't worry about sticking to the reference exactly – you can make improvements as you go along.

STEP 08 Move the flower and fire elements off to the side and start outlining the top of the headpiece. You can draw half of it and flip or duplicate it. I also drew in some areas that are not visible in the original sketch so that I have this full headpiece as an individual element.

STEP 09 Draw a skull, then scale it to fit and make enough copies to go across the headpiece. Start filling in other details, duplicating where possible. Give the flower and fire pieces white backgrounds, scale and drop them back into the design as well. I decided to make the flowers bigger and duplicated more of them to make the design bolder.

STEP 10 Next, draw the ear and earring parts and flip/duplicate them. Repeat the process for the hair. It's best to hide elements after you've drawn them so you can focus more easily on the individual sections you're working on.

STEP 11 Unhide any of the elements if needed and get to work on the neckpiece. Again, tackle it one part at a time and add in as much detail as your ADD will let you!

STEP 12 For the face, start with the outside and work in, duplicating and flipping wherever you can to save time. Have fun with the tribal markings and stray from the original sketch as needed.

STEP 13 When you work on the eyes, nose and mouth, take your time getting it right and as true to life as possible. It helps if you place photos of human eyes, lips and noses into your art board for reference.

"Hide elements after you've drawn them so you can focus more easily on the individual sections you're working on"

STEP 14 Once all of the black line art is done, it's time to merge it into one piece. Select your line art and click Merge in the Pathfinder palette. Then choose **Object > Flatten Transparency** in the dropdown. Click away to deselect and select any white areas and choose **Select > Same > Fill Color**. Tap Delete on your keyboard.

STEP 15 You should be left with just the completed black-filled drawing. Select All and choose the Live Paint Bucket tool. Pick a colour and click away. Once all the base colours are in, Select All and choose **Object > Expand**. Select any black shape and got to **Select > Same > Fill Color**. Cut and paste the black line art onto a new layer.

STEP 16 Create a new layer above the base colour and below the black line art. Make some darker shading colours and add them to your colour palette. Select the Blob Brush tool and put the finishing touches on your piece by adding shading and depth. ■

PROFILE PALE HORSE DESIGN

Hailing from Tampa Bay, Florida, Pale Horse is the moniker and studio space of digital illustrator Chris Parks. Since opening the doors in 2006, Pale Horse has had the opportunity to create artwork for companies like Hasbro, Iron Fist, Dean Guitars, Globe, Hart and Huntington, Vans, Red Bull and many others. Pale Horse also actively participates in various gallery exhibitions throughout the US and Europe.

CONTACT

• *palehorsedesign.com*

Above *The Kraken*; **right** *Dead Geisha*; **below** *Our Lady Of The Lucre Libre*.

Chris Parks' bold, heavy metal style has been reproduced on T-shirts, skateboards, guitars and even shoes.

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- Roughly 2 days

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop CS or later

> LEARN DRAWING FOR SCREEN-PRINTING

Tuning an Orchestra of Wolves

Dan Mumford reveals digital drawing skills for a Gallows poster

This tutorial reveals how artist Dan Mumford creates a poster for a special show by the aggressive and spittle-flecked Watford punks Gallows, where the band played their debut album, *Orchestra of Wolves*, in its entirety. The poster was a take on the album's front cover, which Dan designed back in 2006.

The poster is a four-colour screen print on A3, 230gsm card. Dan takes you through how he created the piece, and discusses how its final form as a screen print affected his decisions.

KEEP ELEMENTS SEPARATE

> Try and keep background and foreground elements separate when working on them. This allows you to play around with composition up until the last minute, as well as tweak sizing and placement to get the perfect composition. It also means you can drop the opacity on one element so you can focus on another area, without getting lost in a sea of black lines.

STEP 01 Before starting on the image, I collected reference images of wolves. I wanted to go for quite a realistic look – as opposed to the cartoonish style of the original album cover.

I wanted to reflect the maturing of the band and, perhaps, the darker tone that they had adopted since their second album onwards.

STEP 02 Using the wolf reference images, I started to develop a composition. I created a new A4 canvas in Photoshop and began drawing some quick black line work with the Pen tool.

I did this very roughly to see if the image would work, compositionally. At this stage in my work, I'm trying to create the right shape and flow, rather than focusing on details.

STEP 03 Next I added in colour on a new layer below the black line-work layer. Bearing in mind this is for a screen print that will be printed by hand, hence the colours must be kept to a maximum of four – plus the white of the card, I kept my tones simple. With this in mind, I created something that's quite minimal in colour and also uses lighting to good effect.

STEP 04 Once this rough version was approved by the band, I opened up an A3 canvas at 400dpi in Photoshop and brought in the rough version at 30% opacity. 300dpi may be the standard for print work, but I like to work quite closely zoomed in at around 6% as I find the extra 100dpi gives me a little more fidelity.

I used a black brush with a stroke width of around 40 pixels. This is the only tool I use to create the black line work because at this stage, I'm only working on the foreground.

STEP 05 With the foreground finished, I added a new layer below and started work on the background imagery. I created the moon by using the Ellipse tool set to Paths and laying strokes on the path with the Brush tool, using a width of around 30 pixels. I then cut into the circle around the edges to create the rougher look.

STEP 06 To finalise the composition of the poster before colouring, I extended the canvas and added a black border using the Rectangle tool and a slight white border – also using the Rectangle tool – with an inside stroke set to around 10pts to add some extra depth. Extending the canvas further at the top, I added a second thin white rectangle with a stroke. This is where I plan to add type about the gig later.

STEP 07 When I'm happy with the whole image, I discard the rough imagery and flatten everything onto one black-and-white layer called 'Linework'. It's worth noting here that when I lay down colours, they will be printed under this, as this black line-work is the final layer to be printed. Therefore I need to ensure everything sits below this in my Layers panel, so I get an accurate representation of how my piece will come out.

LESS COLOUR IS DEFINITELY MORE

› When screen-printing, try and use the limited range of colours to their fullest. You can even use more opaque inks to create more colours than you have at your disposal, by printing them one on top of another.

Also, always remember that the paper itself is a colour you should use - it gives you just a little bit more room to play around with different schemes and lighting effects.

STEP 08 To finish this top 'Linework' layer, I changed its blending mode to Multiply, so colours will show through in the white areas. I created a new layer underneath and filled this with white, using the Paint Bucket. This layer represents the card and the white base that the print will be created on.

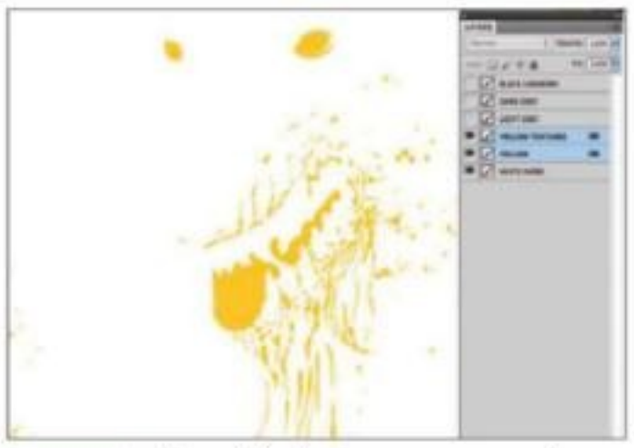
STEP 09 Still thinking in screen-printing terms, I work with the lightest colour first. I created a layer between the 'Linework' and the background called 'Light Grey', and painted in the light grey of the wolves.

I created another layer behind this called 'Yellow', and roughly painted yellow everywhere the wolves aren't, as well as behind the borders and the area where the type will be. I want to use yellow elsewhere, but I needed to create other elements first. Therefore, I'll return to this layer later on in the tutorial.

STEP 10 Next I added a fifth layer called 'Dark Grey', and began painting in the darker-grey shadows. When applying this colour, I kept in mind the light source coming from the moon in the sky and tried to create an effective mood, whilst not overpowering the image with the dark grey.

STEP 11 Then it was time to go back to the yellow as I wanted to add some splatters and bits of texture to the wolves' mouths. I had to keep in my mind that the yellow is the first layer to be printed, so we'll need to craftily remove anything in other colour layers that will get in the way.

To do this, I added on a new layer at the top of the layer stack called 'Yellow Textures' and painted these elements. When I was happy with it, I selected the yellow on this layer using **Select > Color Range**, and cut this selection out of both grey layers – so when the grey layers are printed, there's space here for the yellow to come through.

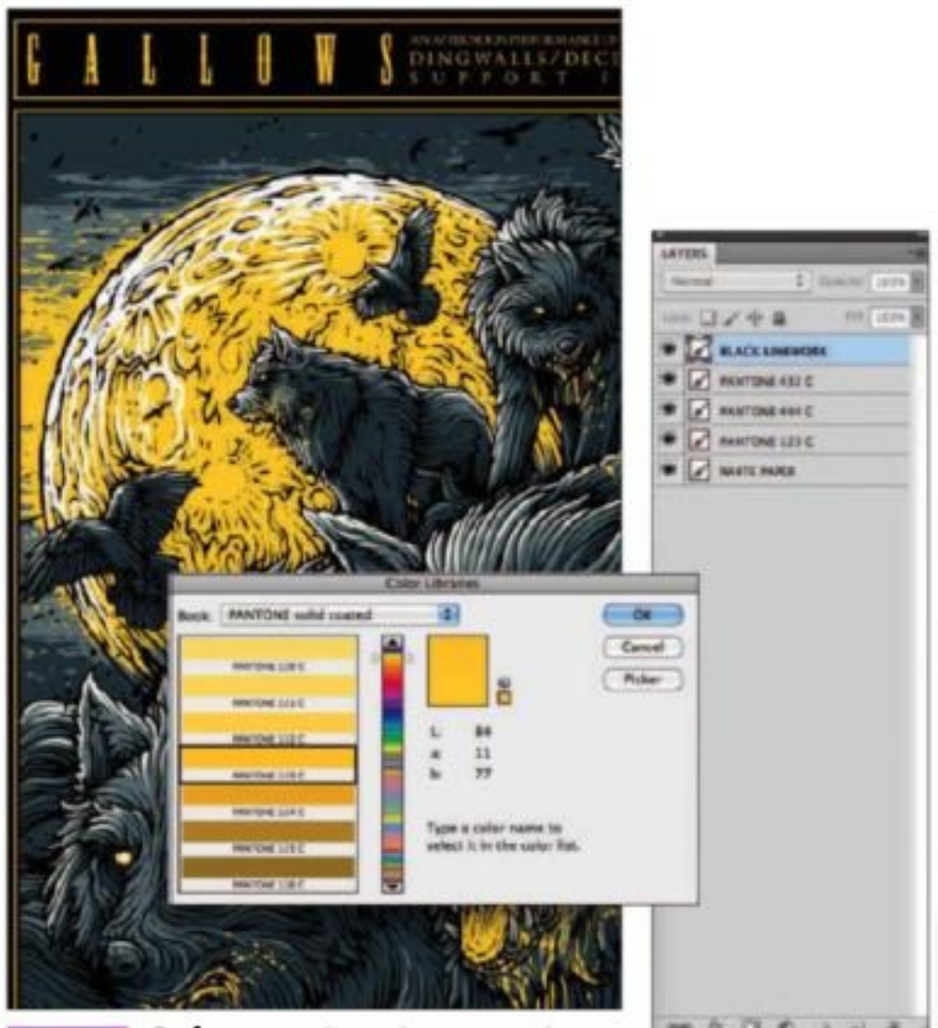


STEP 12 Now this is done, we need to pop this 'Yellow Textures' layer behind the other colour layers. I dragged it down to just above the 'Yellow' layer. I also used a Stroke layer style to apply a thin, 2pt yellow stroke (using the Layer Style button at the bottom of the Layers panel). This is to leave room for error when the piece is printed, so that no white shines through. I merged the two yellow layers together so they're ready for printing.

STEP 13 To add the type, I first reverted the 'Linework' layer's blending mode back to Normal (instead of Multiply) as I'm going to combine it with this layer. I added in my type in white using the Type tool.

Once I was happy with the type, I merged it and the black-and-white image together. When I set this layer's blending mode to Multiply, the type shines through as yellow.

STEP 14 The image is nearly complete. As a final touch, I added some white highlights to the wolves and the moon. To do this, all I had to do was use the Eraser tool on the yellow and light-grey layers, as I would the Brush tool. By erasing from their respective layers, I let the white shine through.



STEP 15 Before sending the artwork to the printers, I made sure I had layered it correctly – from lightest to darkest up the layer stack: yellow, light grey, dark grey and black.

Finally, I created Pantone references for all the layers – so when I send the file away to be printed, the printers use the correct ink. I used the Eyedropper tool to select each colour in turn, opened the Color Picker, then clicked on Color Libraries to find out which Pantone colour was nearest to the one I had chosen.

STEP 16 With everything confirmed as correct, I sent the file away to the printers, decided on the stock – choosing nice, thick 230gsm card, and waited to see if the final result matched what I had intended. Thankfully, it did, and I had an eye-catching final piece. ■

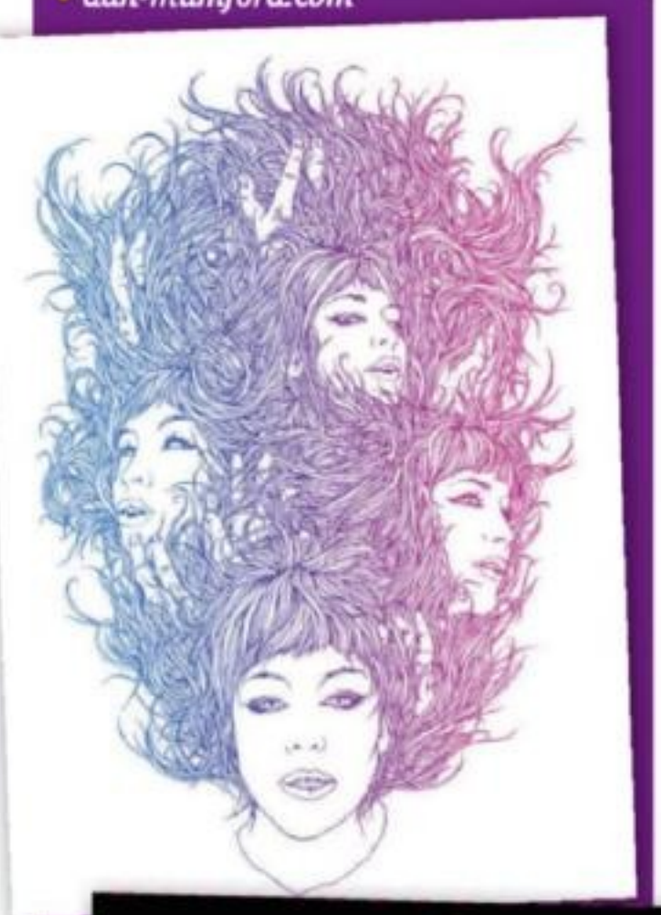
PROFILE DAN MUMFORD

Dan Mumford is an illustrator and designer hailing from Central London, where he works in a shared studio in Dalston.

Dan mainly works in the music industry creating record covers and tee designs for many bands, including Gallows, Parkway Drive, Bring Me The Horizon, The Devil Wears Prada, and many more. He also works for a diverse range of clients, such as Nike, Adidas and Mishka.

CONTACT

- *mumfordclothing.com*
- *dan-mumford.com*



Above top *Francesca*
Above middle *Dominion*
Above *In The Belly of A Shark*

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

› INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 1 day

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> LEARN RETRO ARTWORK

Create super psychedelic artwork

Ollie Munden explains how to create 1970s-inspired poster art using sketching and multi-layering techniques in Photoshop

This tutorial guides you through some simple steps that will help you create a psychedelic-influenced Pharaoh-themed illustration. The use of bold colour and blurring techniques are brought together with hand-rendered imagery to successfully create a very eye-catching piece of artwork.

You will learn how to tidy up drawn line work and you will construct a number of line work layers, which later form a completed composition. The use of some vector halftone-style dots adds a slight 'pop art' flavour to the work, this file is included on the project files. Our project files include the layered low-res artwork I worked from, but if you're feeling more adventurous, replace the Pharaoh element with a character of your choice. The main thing to focus on is a reflected composition and a bold colour palette. The use of the eyes in this example do help to make it more striking, so if you use another character it might be worth thinking about how you can achieve the same effect.

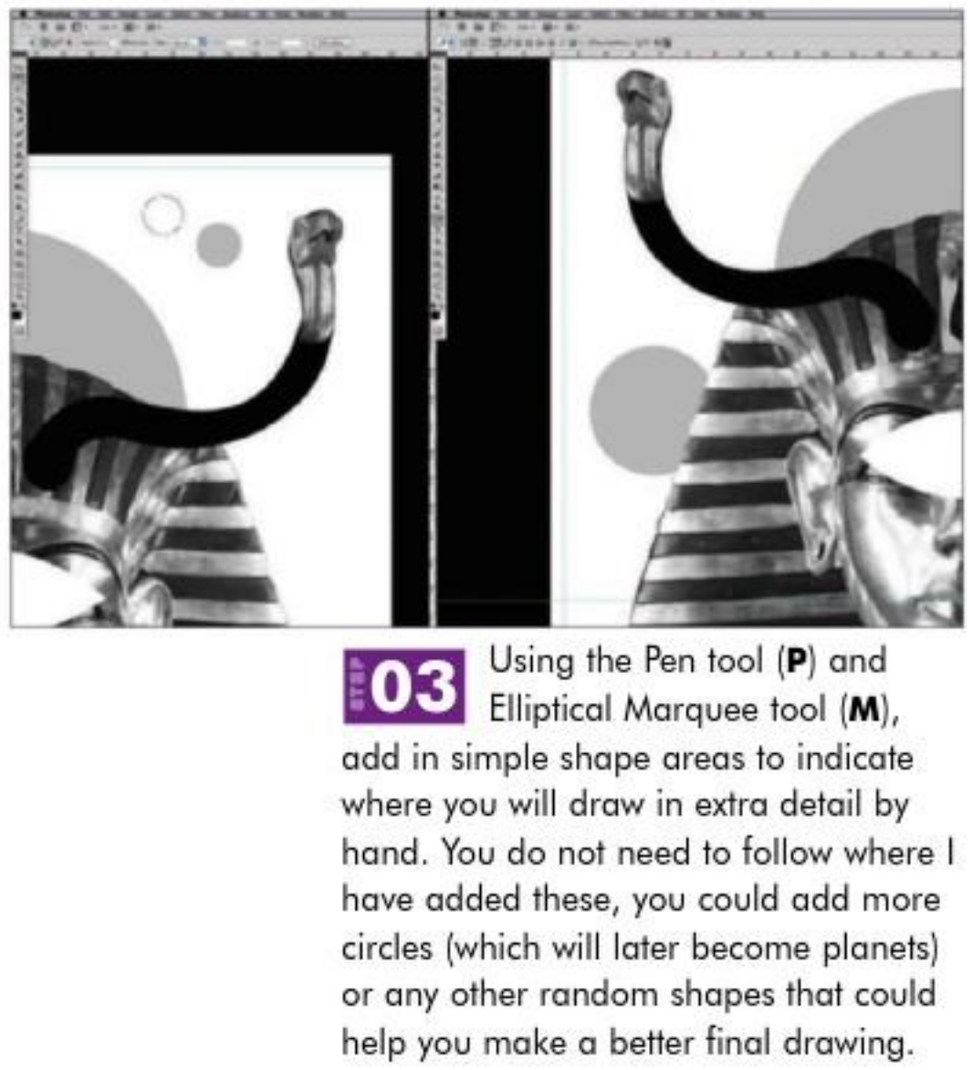
If you're sitting comfortably, I think it's time to get psychedelically started.

STEP 01 Import a photograph of a Pharaoh into Photoshop and use the Pen tool (**P**) to cut around the head. If you don't fancy using a Pharaoh, it could be any head-type image from an astronaut to an animal.

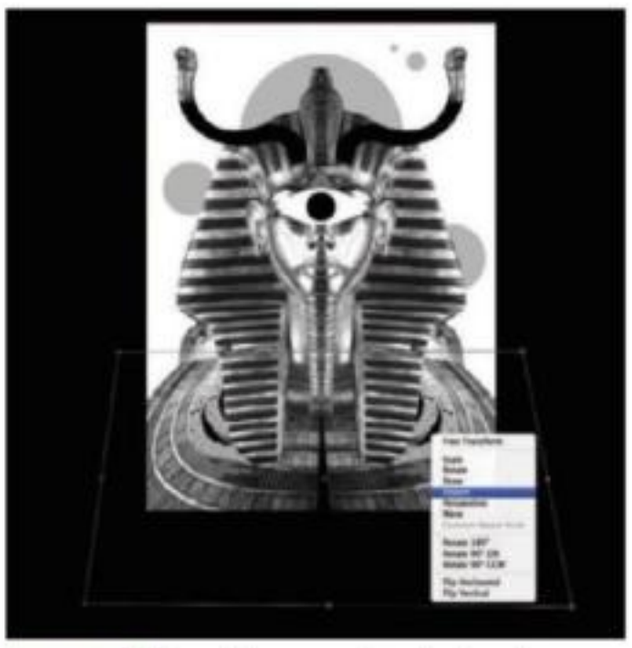
JOIN THE DOTS

› The Magic Wand (**W**) is your best friend in this type of artwork. When you draw, make sure you always try to join your lines to create completed shapes – this allows you to use the Magic Wand tool to select areas that you want to add some colour to easily.

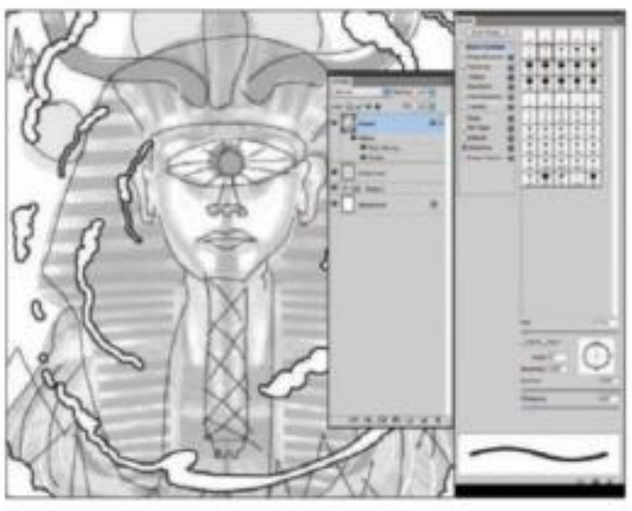
STEP 02 Our base outline needs complete symmetry so that any elements we add are more obvious. Cut the image in half using the Rectangular Marquee tool (**M**) **+ Delete**. Duplicate the half image and reflect it by **Cmd/Ctrl + clicking** on the image layer, selecting Free Transform, then **Cmd/Ctrl + clicking** and choosing Flip Horizontal.



STEP 03 Using the Pen tool (**P**) and Elliptical Marquee tool (**M**), add in simple shape areas to indicate where you will draw in extra detail by hand. You do not need to follow where I have added these, you could add more circles (which will later become planets) or any other random shapes that could help you make a better final drawing.



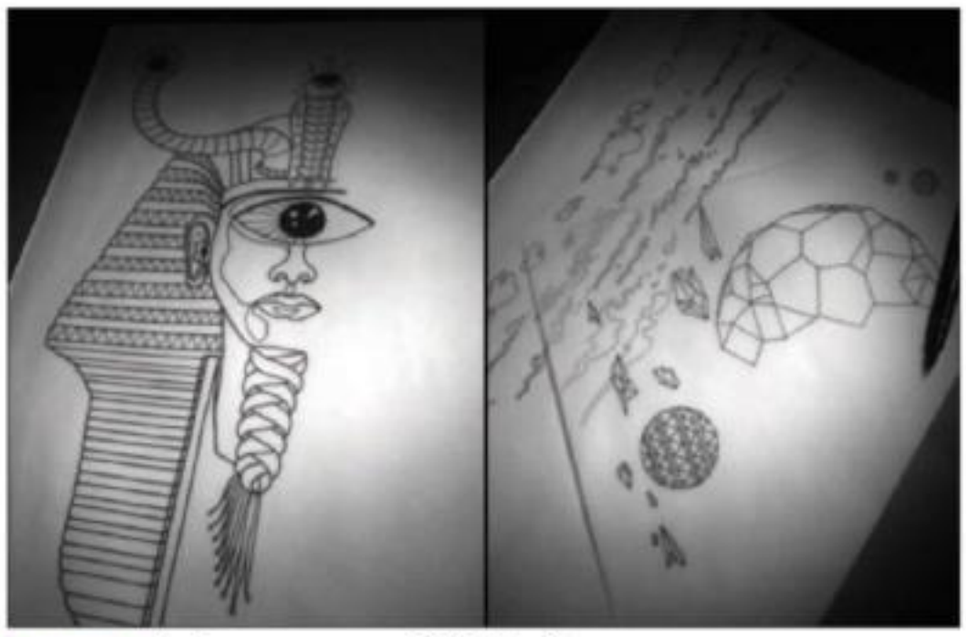
STEP 04 To add some depth, I cut around the bottom stripy area of the Pharaoh's headdress and used the Distort tool (**Cmd/Ctrl**) to create some perspective. With the piece aimed at having a psychedelic appearance, unusual perspectives like this will help create that impression.



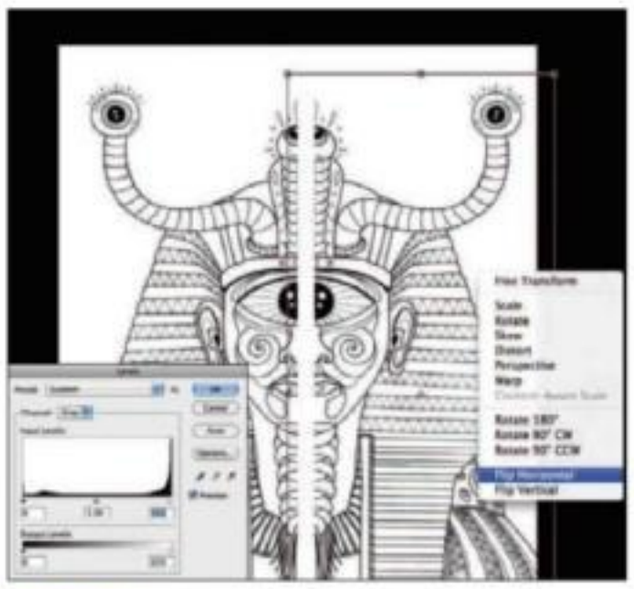
STEP 05 I create and then print digital elements, draw on them, scan them in again, and repeat until I get what I want. The first layer is a sketch over the photo using the Brush tool (**B**). I added a second layer with a blending mode of Color Overlay (set to white) and a stroke layer mode to create the black outlines around the edge of each cloud. It helps me see where I want to add detail. ›

STEP 06 Print this photographic mock up onto A3 paper (or two A4s and tape it together if necessary). Using a soft pencil and tracing paper, trace over the main outlines of the photographic elements.

Once that is complete you can elaborate upon the design with new puffs of smoke or abstract shapes. Use this time to be free with your drawing. Get experimental: it's your time to figure out how the design will be.



STEP 07 I always use pencil first before moving to pens for the final trace. Using three weights of fine liner pen, trace out each element of the piece on separate tracing paper sheets. I started with the main element: The Pharaoh.

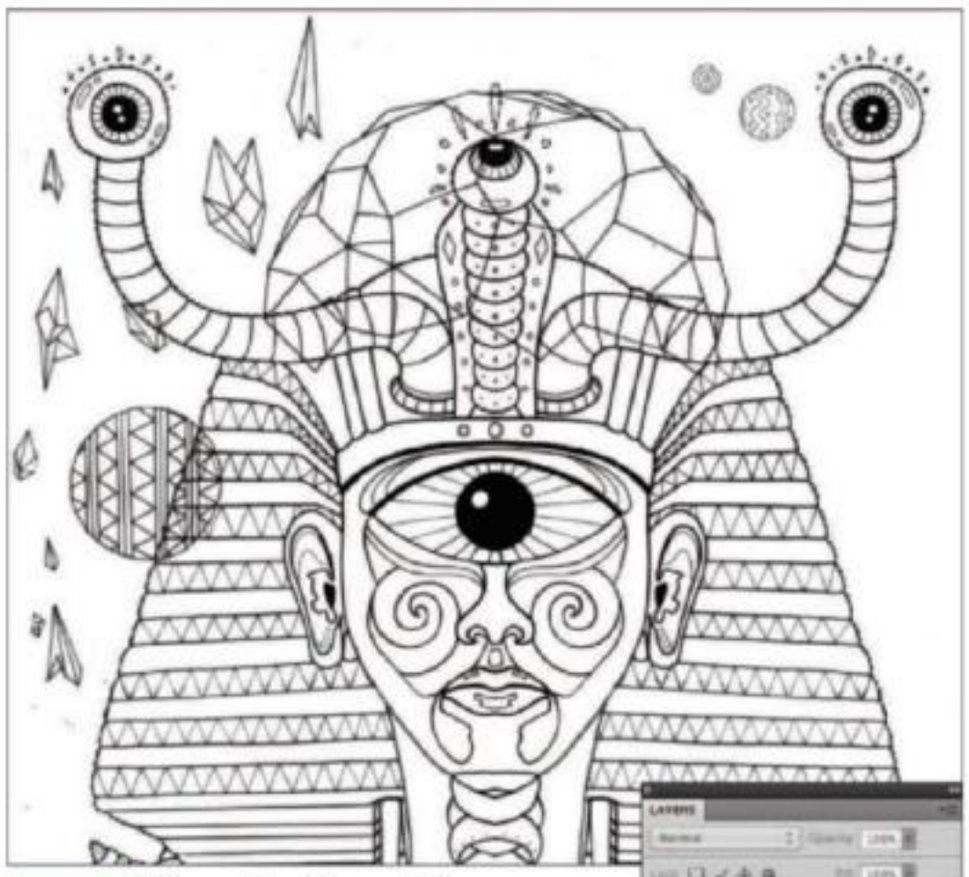


STEP 08 Once you have drawn everything, scan in each sheet. Begin with the Pharaoh element. Tidy up the artwork using Levels Adjustments. Use the Dodge tool (**O**), set to 100% and Highlights, to clean up more intricate areas.

Once clean, select exactly half of the illustration, but remember to erase any unnecessary elements. Duplicate this and flip horizontally, then aligning the two halves.

MAKE IT POP

› It's really about alternating colours and constantly observing how the balance of colour is working across the artwork. Using a good range of colours really helps; in my version yellow is the highlight colour and all the other colours work with it. But it's the yellow that's used to pull certain details out, particularly the central eyeball.



STEP 09 Once the Pharaoh is constructed, bring in and clean up the other artwork elements. Begin to contract the artwork as shown. Use Layer Masks to hide any unwanted details (using the Magic Wand tool (**W**) to select the areas first).

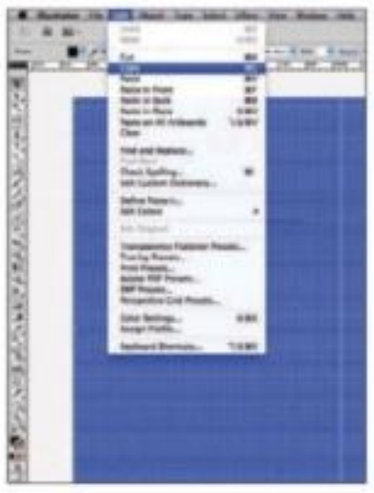
STEP 10 Using Threshold in the Adjustments panel, set as shown above, clean up all of your drawing layers to create hard linework. It'll be easier to work with later.

Now add colour. Create a new layer group for the colour layers and remember to create a new layer for each colour you add for easy adjusting if you want to make changes later.

Use the Magic Wand to select areas, then **Select > Modify > Expand** to select areas from the lifework layers.

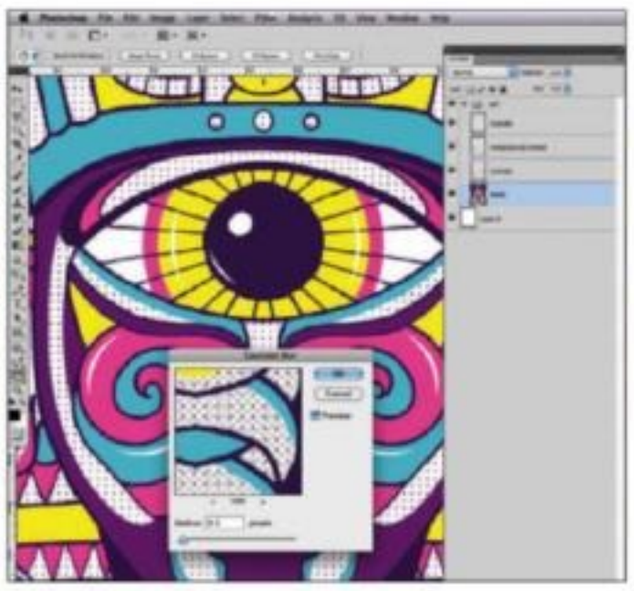
"To combat creative block I look through books, or websites like *ffffound.com*, and keep a 'cool stuff' folder to get me inspired"

STEP 11 Begin adding colours on new layers using this technique. I began with the background layer first so I could lay down dark colours. Then when I came to the foreground colours I could see if they 'popped' the way I wanted them to.



STEP 12 Once the piece is fully coloured, open up *dots.eps* in Illustrator from the project and copy and paste all of the dots into your Photoshop document to give a halftone effect. If you don't have Illustrator, you can Place the EPS into Photoshop, but copy and pasting will maintain it as a vector for smoother results after resizing.

Choose how intense you would like the dots to be. I picked the mid purple that I used throughout the project, which keeps them quite subtle. I coloured them using a Colour Overlay. This can be done by double clicking on the dots layer in the layer palette.

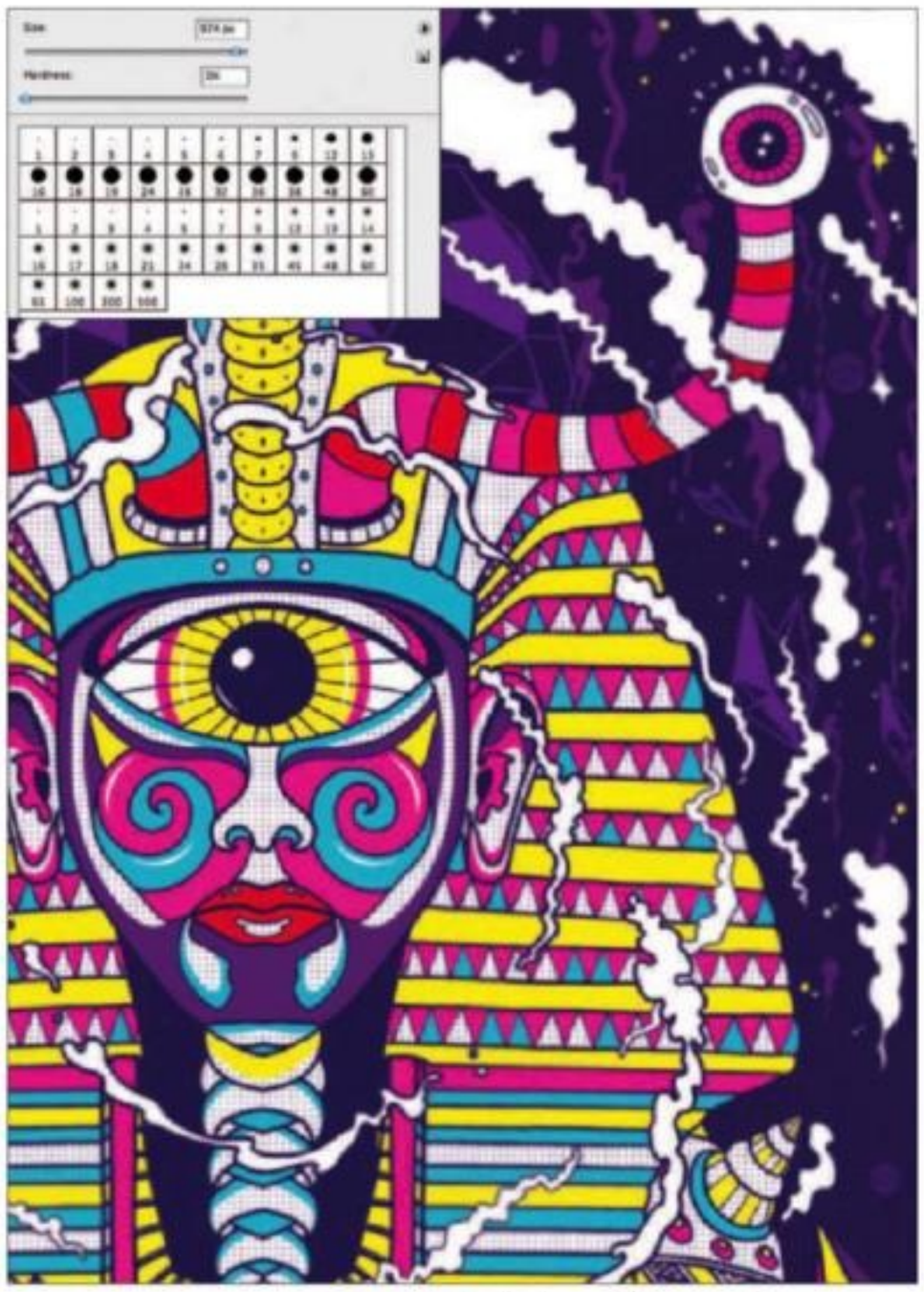


STEP 13 The piece is nearly complete. But the icing on the psychedelic cake are some final effects. Save yourself out a copy of the PSD for future editing if needed, then merge all colour layers and any other layer except for the overlaying clouds and spikes – keep these as separate layers for now.

Go to **Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur** and give this new layer a blur of around 0.5 pixels. This just softens the linework up a little. Merge all your layers.

STEP 14 Add a Levels Adjustment layer and tweak the colours a little to make sure they are as rich as they can be. Select all, copy and paste. Set this new layer's blending mode to Soft Light and turn the opacity down to around 40%. Also add a Gaussian Blur of two pixels to this layer.

STEP 15 Flatten all artwork to a single layer. Now duplicate this layer and use a Gaussian Blur set to 4.8 pixels on the new layer.



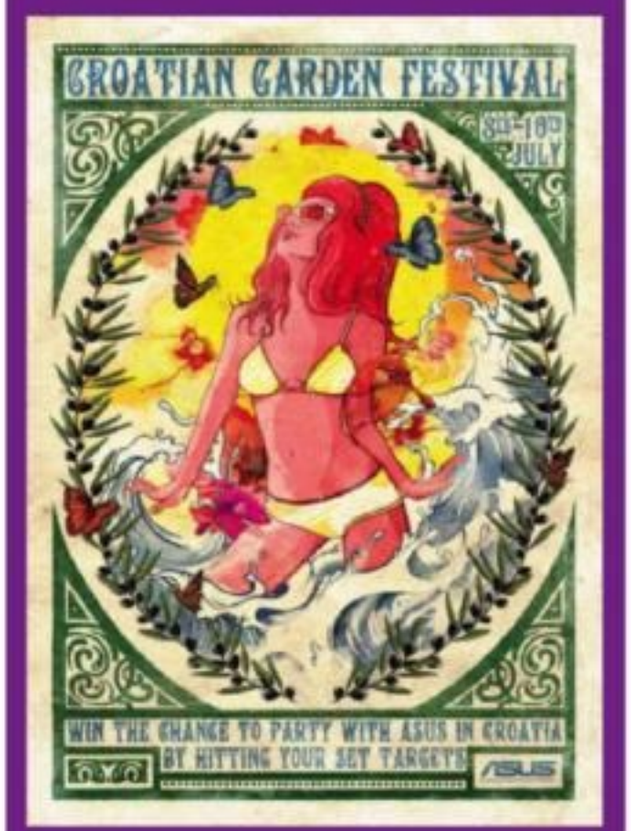
STEP 16 Select a soft, large Eraser brush (**E**) and begin to erase the blurred layer, taking care to leave areas of blur, particularly around the edges. This helps to give the art a more floaty, dreamy, soft focus-type look. ■

PROFILE OLLIE MUNDEN

Ollie Munden – aka Megamunden – is an illustrator whose work combines nature's creatures, tattoo design, psychedelia, 1980s skate graphics and an essence of the Far East to create his illustrations.

CONTACT

- *megamunden.com*



Above top A poster to promote the Croatian Garden music festival. Ollie says: "I used a lot of digital painting in Photoshop on this artwork, something I don't normally do. I found some great brushes in the Wet Brush palette that gave some realistic results"

Above "This piece was a collaboration with VelvetSpectrum (*velvetspectrum.com*). VS has been learning 3D software and wanted to use some of my character illustrations as inspiration to create 3D characters. It was used for PlayStation's new theme store called The Studio. (*uk.playstation.com/thestudio*)"

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> LEARN LINE ART & SHADING TECHNIQUES

Create iconic T-shirt artwork

Use Illustrator to draw a biker-style graphic using vector shapes

> INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 4 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator & Photoshop CS3

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

Joshua Smith, aka maverick illustrator Hydro74, has a style that's instantly recognisable – combining the thick, clean lines of graffiti with the iconography of tattoos and the symmetry and patterns of vector art. Here he takes you through how he created this work, based around his regular motifs of skulls and swirls mixed with an owl.

As you follow this tutorial, you'll discover lots of tricks to help you create better art and work faster in Illustrator. You'll learn how to improve your skills with line art, shading using flat fills and colour techniques for limited palettes (to keep printing costs down).

Joshua says that as his techniques are more about drawing vector shapes using the Pen tools than brush strokes, you'll get better results from a mouse than a graphics tablet. Joshua adds that he wrote this tutorial using Illustrator CS3, as he finds the Pathfinder tool – which features a lot in this tutorial – in CS4 to be painful when dealing with complex paths.

Joshua has also kindly provided us with a wealth of vector artworks and fonts, available in the project files.

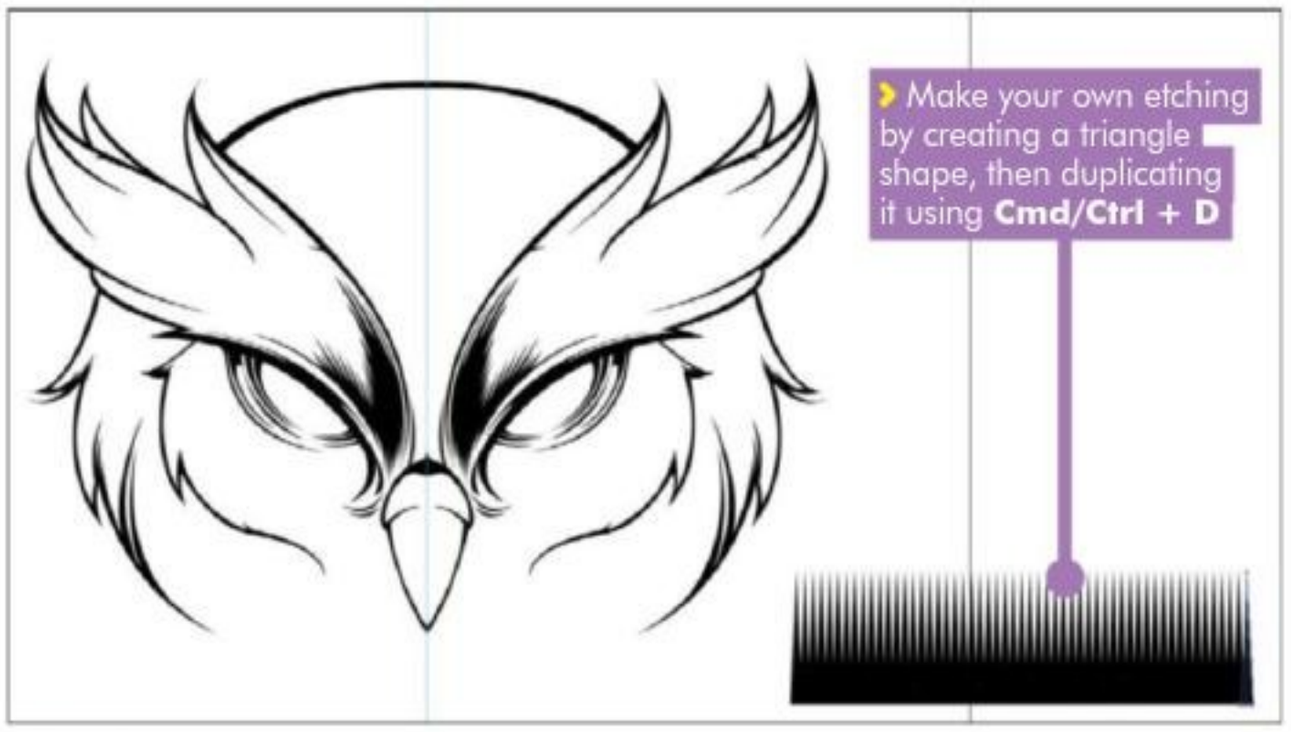
> "Don't follow your lines directly from the drawing, but allow yourself to be free – you're doing this to explore."

STEP 01 First off, I did a really rough drawing of the head of an owl to get the piece in motion. Then I went into Photoshop and made it symmetrical. The goal here with a rough, basic drawing is to allow yourself to be more creative in Illustrator as you click away. You never just want to trace what is there, but add your touch on what feels right and allow that inner creative demon to ask: 'What if we did this?'. You can use your own sketch here, or open *Owl.ai* from the project files.

STEP 02 Import your image into Illustrator, enlarge it to a decent size and drop the transparency down to 50%. From there, set up a guide in the centre of the image. The goal is to save time, thus drawing one side and perfecting that. Create a new layer to allow you to click off the drawing to see how progress is going.

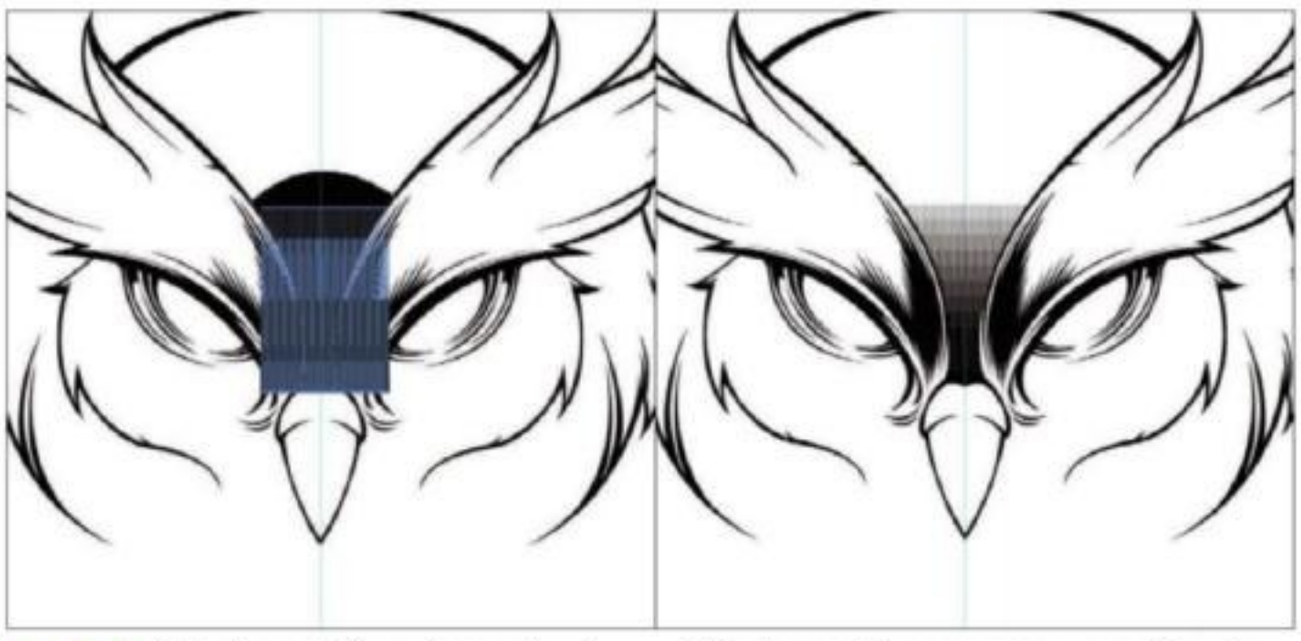
STEP 03 Now it's time to click and drag using the Pen tool (**P**). As you click away, start adding small amounts of detail and exploring what works. Don't follow your lines directly from the drawing, but allow yourself to be free – you're doing this to explore.

STEP 04 When you get to a good spot, copy the art and flip it. Once I put the two sides together, I can see where my mistakes are, or if I'm on target. This is a good point to step away for a few moments and get a cup of tea, so you can look at the piece with fresh eyes.

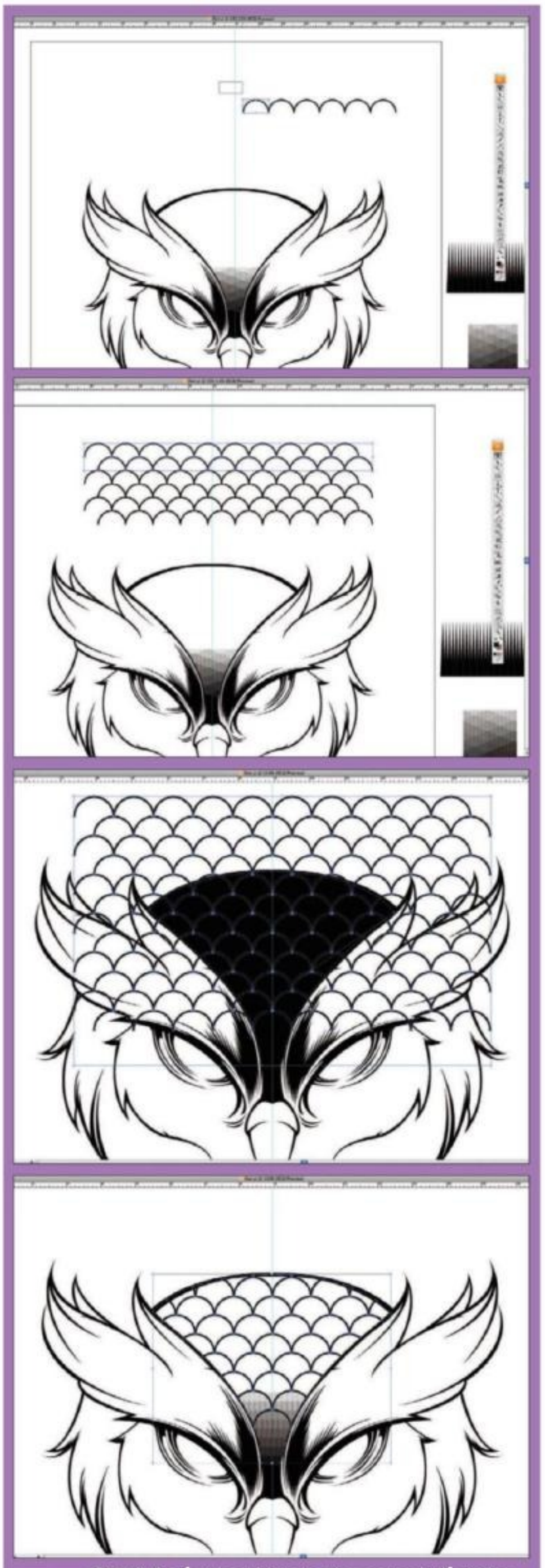


› Make your own etching by creating a triangle shape, then duplicating it using **Cmd/Ctrl + D**

STEP 05 Once you've drawn the outline, it's time to add some details. I've worked a little etching into the piece by creating long, thin triangle-shaped pieces arranged together in a row.



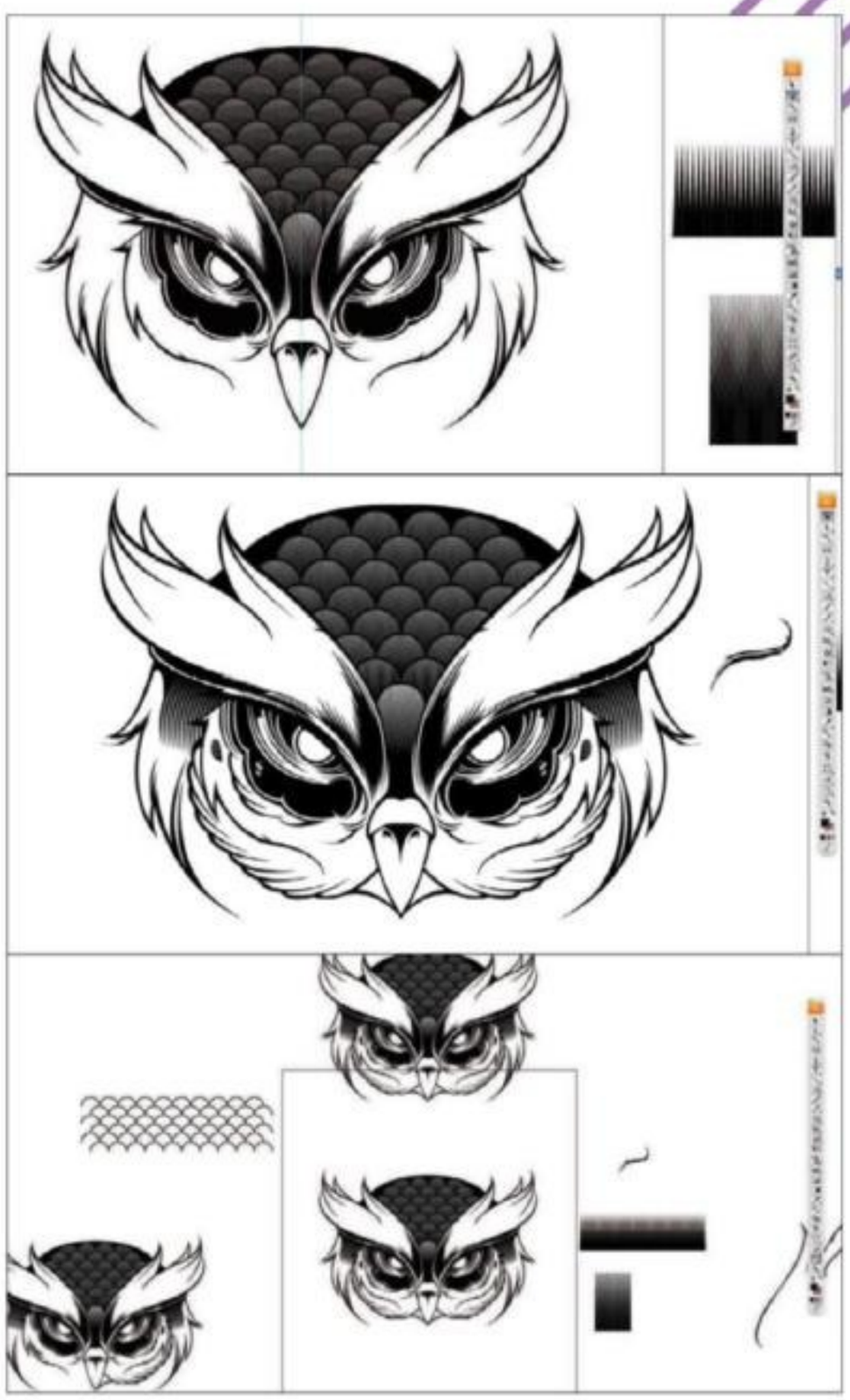
STEP 06 Take the etching element and play with it by stretching it then placing it over the owl's eyebrows. To funnel it between the eyebrows, select the element, open the Pathfinder (**Shift + Cmd/Ctrl + F9**) and use the Crop function. One downside to this function is that every time you crop, you'll notice annoying blank lines. To remove them, use the Pen tool to make a line with no colour or stroke, then click on **Select > Same > Fill & Stroke**. Hit **Delete** and you're done. Keep a copy of the etching lines nearby.



STEP 07 Detail the forehead by creating some half circles and aligning them in a row. Stack these rows to cover the area that you want to fill. It helps to group (**Cmd/Ctrl + G**) these shapes before placing them on top of the illustration so you don't have to click them individually if you make a mistake.

SAVE IT FOR LATER

› As you are working on an illustration, always make a copy on the side so you can use it again if you need to – especially if, like me, you love to crop things down. This is because you never know when you may want to grab an element for a future piece – or go back to it to remove the eyeball nipples.

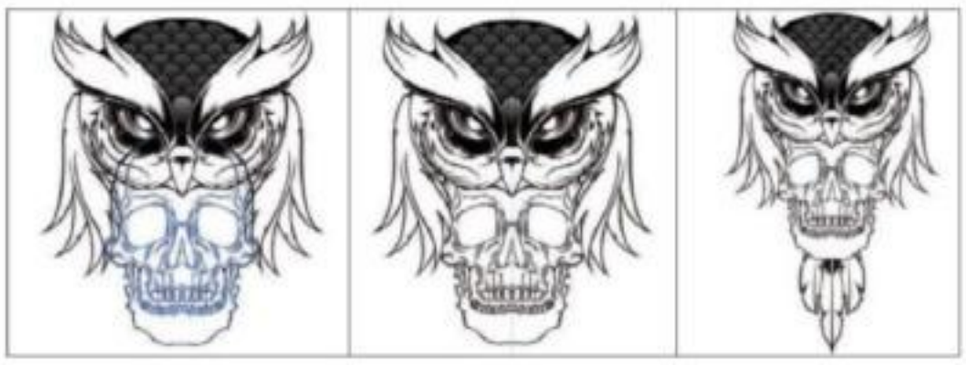


STEP 08 Repeat the techniques from Step 6 to add etching to these 'feathers' (this is why I told you to keep a copy of those etching lines.) You can fill each half-circle separately, or fill the whole section with this element to save time. I've decided to do each one individually, as it looks better.

STEP 09 To fill each half-circle individually, duplicate the cropped element you just created, rather than cropping each area. Once done filling those areas, select each one and crop it into the head. If you want to experiment here, try using wider or smaller shapes, or halftone dots.

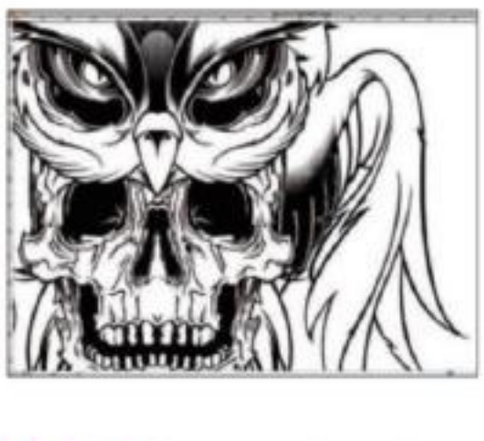
STEP 10 Now for some detail. This is a good point to start filling in areas with black, and adding little texture scrapes. The goal is to make it look somewhat organic. At this point, I also like to start deleting things I don't need, but I don't want to lose anything I worked on in case I change my mind. Create a copy, drag it to the top and you're free to experiment without worry.

STEP 11 Add some feathers at the sides, flowing downwards to tie in the body elements. They also fill out the artwork's dimensions to better suit a T-shirt print. I want to put a skull under the head, but if skulls aren't your thing, add a fluffy little cloud, or a happy little tree, or something. ›



STEP 12 If you have a Hydro74 trademarked skull handy, feel free to use it now. Custom typography would work well here, too. Drop in the skull and start building the surrounding areas. It's starting to come together a little now.

STEP 13 Section off the different components – the owl and the skull – as individual elements. To do this, group together the owl head and trace around it in white. Repeat with the skull. This way, you can resize those elements more easily.



STEP 14 Since you have the two heads filled in, start dropping in some highlights and dark areas onto one of the wings to add detail. Play around with some etching elements and send them to the back, behind the owl head and skull. To detail the other wing, take the side you worked on, duplicate it and flip it. Finally for the outline, add some eyes to the skull. Try to ignore the fact that your owl now has eyeballs for nipples.

STEP 15 Time to add colour. This is the hard part, but here's a trick: create a line-art version of your artwork under the 'etched' one, so you can fill the parts without fiddling with the shading. To do this, place a large rectangle over the top and select Crop in the Pathfinder palette. Delete all blank fills and strokes. Lock down everything except the current piece. Click **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + D** for a transparent background. Select a piece of white in your illustration, then click **Select > Same > Fill Color** and delete it. All that's left should be the black. Merge it together. Now create a new layer and place it under your line art. Lock the line art layer.

STEP 16 To fill out the print and make it seem more iconic, I've added some organic swirls and shapes around the main design. ■

PROFILE HYDRO74

Working under the moniker of Hydro74, Orlando-based designer Joshua Smith is as happy creating type treatments and illustrations for world-famous brands as designing his own T-shirts as the Brass Tack label (*Hydro74.com/hydro2011/neu/brasstack.html*). His works have featured on everything from magazine covers to snowboards and trainers. He also sells his typefaces.

"I personally strive to learn something new from every project or try out some techniques that I've only used a couple of times before and want to perfect," he says.

CONTACT

- *hydro74.com*

Above Designs used on Hydro74's T-shirt line, Brass Tack.
Below His motifs borrows heavily from symbolic imagery.

CHAPTER 2

MIXED-MEDIA PROJECTS

COMBINE CRAFT AND DIGITAL TECHNIQUES

Master Mixed -Media Art

Main *Tiamat* were one-off C-type prints from Russ Mills's solo Subsidiary show held at the Signal Gallery in London last year.

Above Raphaël Vicenzi says *Switchblade Soul* looks rushed, but he spent a lot of time trying to find a balance in the image. Scanned textures were used for the woman's hair.

Eva Peaty discovers how to combine digital techniques with real-world crafts to create incredible work

Many of us remember the first time we enhanced a simple sketch with coloured pastels, or realised that the application of paint could add a whole new dimension to a collage made out of newspaper or magazine clippings.

But does the joy of using design programs such as Illustrator and Photoshop mean that it's all too easy to create pieces that utilise precious few of these traditional methods?

Above Mateusz Sypien sketched papercraft models, before creating his digital composition, *Mad Eyez & Papercrafts*.

Creating on the computer alone means we no longer need a large physical space and a vast collection of expensive materials. However, the downside of this approach is work, while technically perfect, can also appear somewhat flat.

We have much to learn from those who successfully manage to combine both traditional mixed-media techniques and digital elements. Their process allows for speedier experimentation and execution, but the resulting works of art still retain an organic element.

"Something that is hand-drawn always brings tactility and authenticity to a piece of artwork," says Ollie Munden (*megamunden.com*), who blends eastern influences and 1980s skate graphics in his intricate creations.

"Only using a computer can make an image feel restricted and a bit stale, but using one to find the perfect ›

Right A child's paint marker was used in Urban *Guerilla Girl II* for the thick blue and red lines. Raphaël Vicenzi scanned them, and played with a few lines to build up the shapes of the woman.

finish for your image is quicker, easier and allows you to try effects you may never have got around to, if you were working by hand only," Ollie says.

"Even though I totally embrace digital techniques, I can't help always having a little more respect for something that's handcrafted."

Raphaël Vicenzi, AKA mydeadpony (*mydeadpony.com*), whose work melds drawings of women with scanned watercolours and textures to create a gritty fashion style, agrees:

"[Working digitally] speeds up the process of creating an illustration that could be mistaken for something that wasn't made with a computer."

"I'm not very fond of purely digital works," adds the Belgian illustrator. "[The digital process] allows a lot of creativity that would, otherwise, not be possible, and the organic part that can never be reproduced exactly with a computer has more life in it."

For others, like Russ Mills (*byroglyphics.com*), using a computer is the only realistic way to produce what would have once taken months.

"I come from a background where traditional media was once the only option," says Russ, who abstractly reprocesses disparate objects and images, taking inspiration from late American artist Robert Rauschenberg.

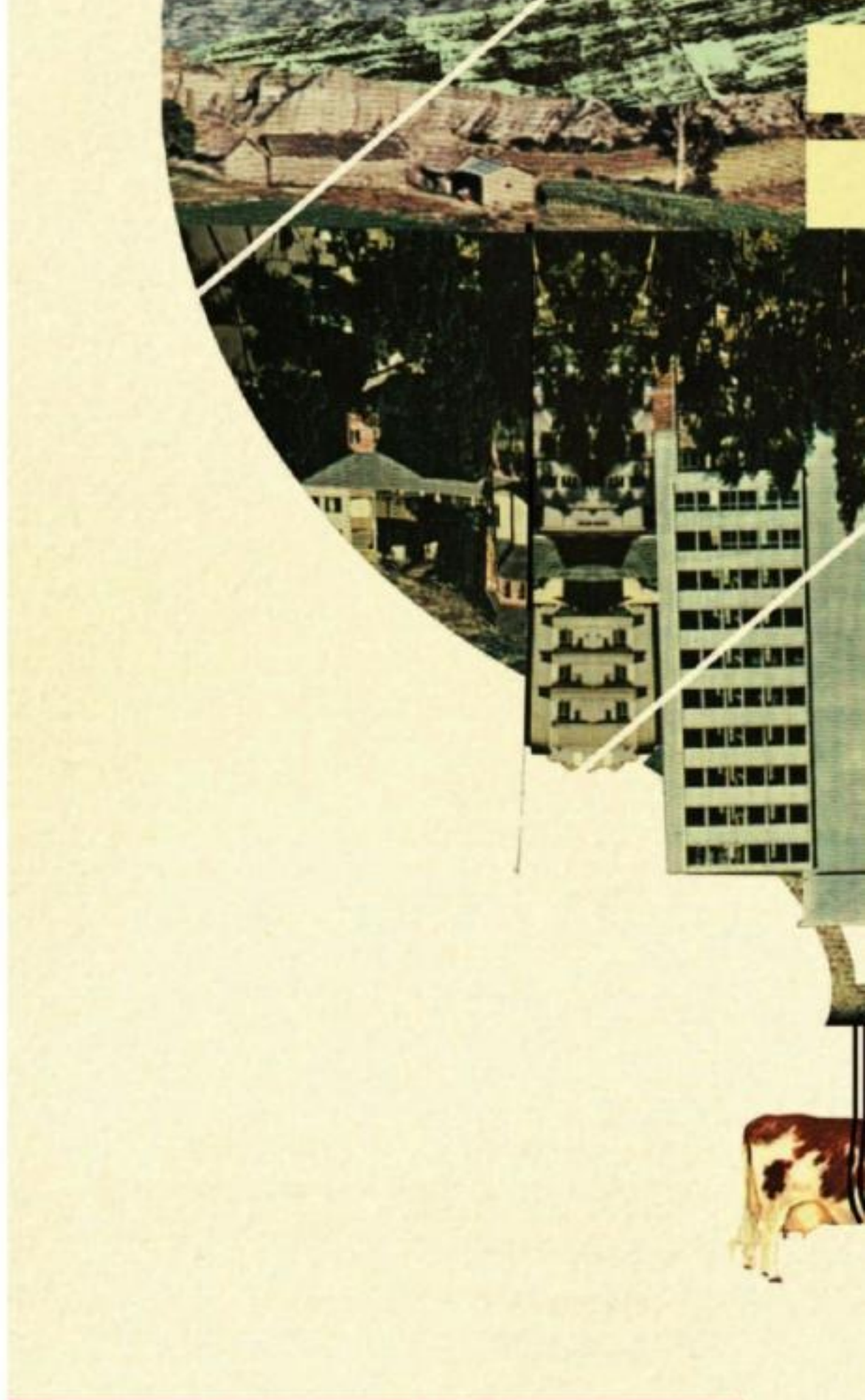
"Bringing as much real media as possible into the digital arena lets me get the results that would, otherwise, be difficult to achieve, or be incredibly time-consuming," he explains.

"The main benefit is the degree of spontaneity that can be injected into each piece; combining unrelated forms often gives an end result that is totally unexpected and really helps to keep the interest level up."

Above Dawn Gardner concentrates on how conflicting messages can be communicated in an abstract form in her visual interpretations of other poems.

However, Russ also highlights the challenges of this type of work; how to combine the different forms for the desired effect, and knowing when to stop. He says that although he has a clear idea of what works for him, there's often a "tipping point where things start to look crap". That's when it's time to start all over again.

Mateusz Sypien (*digi-mental.com*), who primarily works digitally, but also has a strong attachment to papercraft, says it's the overall concept that drives his creative decisions.



Ensuring that all of the dissimilar parts come together can also be challenging. That is half the fun of creating illustrations of this nature

Dawn Gardner

Above Dawn Gardner has documented the emotions that occur within certain time frames in her visual interpretations of segments of instrumental music.

Left Ollie Munden combined pencil drawing, digital colouring and textures overlaid on top of colour fills for *Audio*, created for Brighton's Audio nightclub.

Above Ollie Munden's drawings were combined to create *Dropp World*. Elements were drawn with fineliner pens, then vectorised in Illustrator, and coloured in Photoshop.

"Everything is based on a sense of style and design," says Mateusz.

"When parts don't fit together, they don't work. I don't force anything. One element may change position a couple of times, before it sits in its place."

Ollie agrees, and says the task at hand often tends to dictate what forms are used, and in what combination. He adds that time can be the deciding factor of where to take an image, and what techniques are used to get there.

For Raphaël, who admits he doesn't plan anything in advance, intuition is the ultimate guide.

"It's a self-generating process, so I don't decide anything, per se," he says.

"There is an internal logic to what I do that's difficult to explain because I'm so open to the moment when I'm actually working on an illustration."

Raphaël also adds it can be difficult to find the right balance between scanned elements and the digital side, but that "disasters can lead to happy accidents".

Sam Wolfe (*samwolfeconnelly.com*), who mixes a strong graphite element with digital colouring, has similar issues. He sometimes finds it tricky to create digital or physical elements that, by their very nature, are separated from each other.

"Now and then, it's difficult to take an image from my head and say, 'OK, this part is going to be traditional, and this part I can do digitally', and not have it actually flow together, until it's completely finished," says Sam.

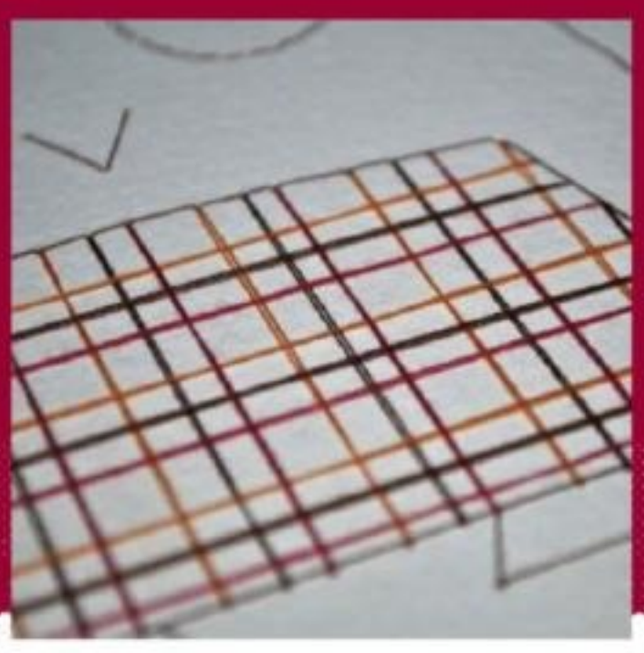
"I guess I feel like I have less control over an image when I'm using a mixed media approach, but sometimes that challenge can work as an advantage."

"Just try to go with the flow," adds Dawn Gardner (*bit.ly/eGMu7V*). She combines photography and hand-rendered elements for her visual interpretations of poems and music.

Another problem relates to the need for powerful hardware to manage large files. Russ admits he spends as much time trying to overcome hardware issues, as he does producing his images.

"Making sure the machine doesn't give up can be a bother. Obviously, ›

Collaboration: Peter Crawley and Ben The Illustrator



Above and Left *Owl* is part of a series of six nature-inspired stitched illustrations from Peter Crawley and Ben The Illustrator.

Right *Bird and Bear.*

If you want to try mixed media work, but aren't quite sure how to go about it, why not produce a piece with someone from a craft background – as illustrator Ben O'Brien did recently with design-influenced stitcher Peter Crawley.

Peter, a product designer by day (*petercrawley.co.uk*), and Ben (aka Ben The Illustrator, *bentheillustrator.com*) came together to produce a series of six nature-inspired stitched illustrations, which intertwine Peter's technical sensibility and Ben's colourful vector characters.

Their relationship began when Ben saw Peter's stitched architectural illustrations online and they struck up a conversation on Twitter. After getting to know each other, they created *Bear*, *Bird*, *Mountain*, *Owl*, *Seals* and *Tree*.

Ben first sketched the designs, before taking them into Illustrator to produce vector versions.

"I had to find some happy mediums of my original lines and shapes in my illustrative style but, at the same time, simple and clean linework for Pete to take and stitch," explains Ben.

Peter then reinterpreted the vector versions, ensuring they could be sewn, but without losing Ben's style or design intent. He printed physical templates, before piercing holes in 420gsm watercolour paper with a pin and stitching the paper with cotton thread.

"I recommend creatives with different skill sets collaborating. You learn a lot about how others work and think, helping you improve your work in the process," says Peter.
peterandben.co.uk

a brand new machine would go some way to changing that, but I don't really see much point in a massive upgrade, until there are processors that will deal with gigabytes the way they do with megabytes nowadays," says Russ, who still works in Photoshop CS3 on a home-built quad core PC.

One way to get round the file size problem is to work in stages. But a piecemeal approach creates another – albeit positive – problem, says Dawn, who wields a scalpel, cutting mat and pencil, alongside an iMac and Ion hand-held document scanner.

"Ensuring that all of the dissimilar parts come together and work as a unified whole can also be challenging, at times," says Dawn. "But I find that is half the fun of creating illustrations of this nature."

And software programs must be mastered quickly, says Ollie, especially when deadlines are looming.

"Learning what all the different tools do can be daunting and time-consuming. For example, using the Pen tool in Illustrator can be tricky at first, but once you get the hang of it, you can get an individual style going," he explains.

"When you work professionally, five to seven days a week, you pick things up very fast. When a client is demanding stuff, you pick your feet up and get going."

I would recommend creatives with different skill sets collaborating. You learn a lot from how others work and think, helping you improve your work

Peter Crawley

Above Russ Mills used emulsion, fineliner, acrylic, ink and varnish in *Ricochet*.

Left *Aeonium* was made with fineliner, acrylic, ink and varnish, before assembling the print digitally.

While Ollie has a vast array of kit, including a MacBook Pro, 22-inch Apple monitor, Epson scanner, HP A3 printer, graphics tablet, pens, pencils, Posca markers and paint, other mixed media artists with far less equipment, such as Raphaël and Sam, still achieve spectacular effects.

And although final year media and production student Mateusz bemoans the fact that he doesn't really have enough space to build paper objects and shoot professional pictures, his work proves that – despite these obvious challenges – a mixed media approach can take our art to a whole new level. ■

Bringing as much real media into the digital arena lets me get the results that would be difficult to achieve, or be incredibly time-consuming

Russ Mills

Owen Gildersleeve

● All of Owen Gildersleeve's work is handcrafted using paper and found objects – but then he photographs and digitally edits it to produce unique work for clients such as the Tate, Cadbury, *the Guardian* and *Scientific American*.

"At school I dabbled in as many mediums as I could lay my hands on, including photography, painting, collage and sculpture. As my work progressed, I wanted to make sure I kept utilising as many of these interests as possible. So, inevitably, my style fell into the world of mixed media."

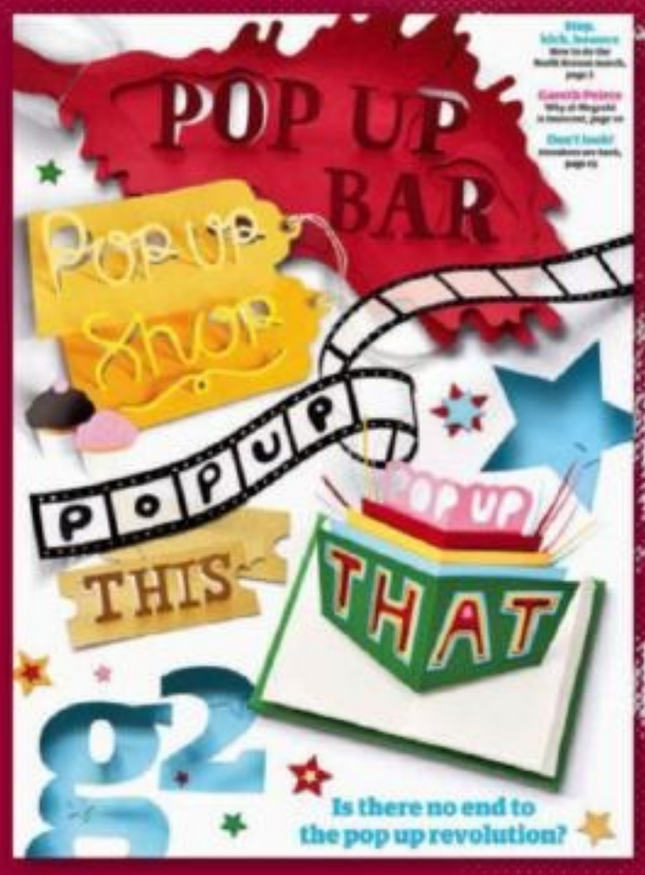
Owen, who references tactile artists such as Anselm Kiefer and Cy Twombly, starts by creating a round of sketches and mock-ups of his intended piece so he can work through ideas and how he wants to assemble it.

Although the piece will be based quite strongly on the sketches, Owen usually experiments still during the assembly stage, playing with the forms and composition.

Finally, Owen photographs the finished piece with his Nikon D5000 camera and edits it in Photoshop.

"The image-editing process is normally quite time-consuming as I want to make sure that the colours and textures are all correct," he explains.

owengildersleeve.com



Above Owen used a range of photos for his cover illustration for *The Guardian's G2* supplement about pop-up stores.

Far left Illustration for US edition of *Wired*.

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> LEARN SHAPE-BASED ART

Explore **new-folk** illustration styles

Combine shapes and textures to radical effect with **Jonny Wan**

Jonny Wan's distinctive, fresh illustrations manage to seem both mechanical and handmade: their characters are composed of intricate, symmetrical vector shapes so that they seem almost clockwork, yet the finishes he applies remind us of woodcuts.

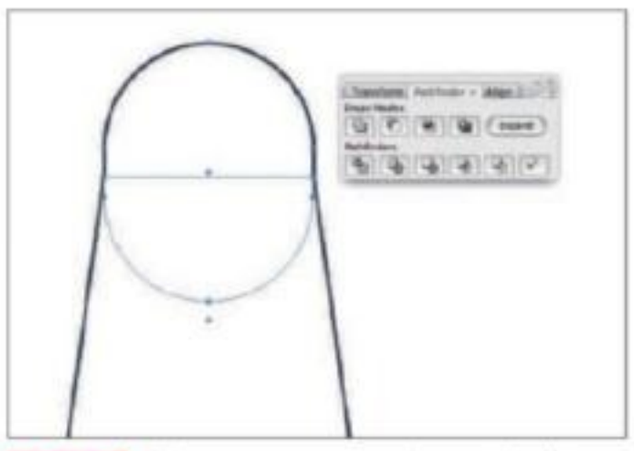
"Every object can be broken down into a combination of various shapes," explains Wan. "The great thing about working with shapes is that the experimental possibilities are infinite."

In this tutorial you'll learn how to combine, merge, and manipulate ships in Illustrator to create an intricate illustration based on a Russian doll.

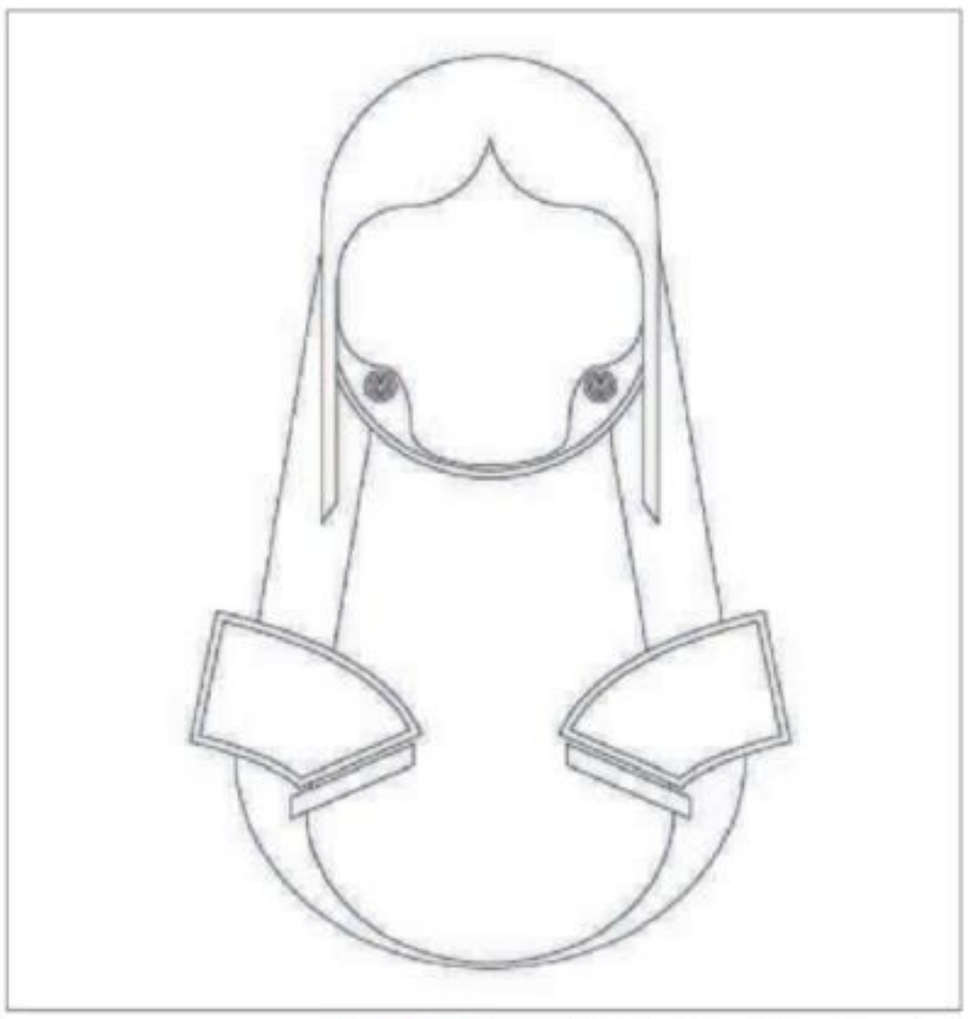
If you'd prefer to concentrate on the texturing and colouring aspects of the tutorial, you can find the vector file in the project files – this is to be used for this tutorial only.

STEP 01 Start researching the subject matter, paying particular attention to the little details associated with the theme. Look for commonalities in the images that you gather – in this case I've noticed a lot of pattern-like repetition of shapes. Also the characters is simple and takes on a symmetrical form.

STEP 02 Open up a new document (**Cmd/Ctrl + N**) in Illustrator and set your document to the relevant size and colour mode for your planned output – so CMYK for print, or RGB for screen. Set your stroke and fill to default (**D**) to begin tracing over your sketch transforming its shapes to vectors.

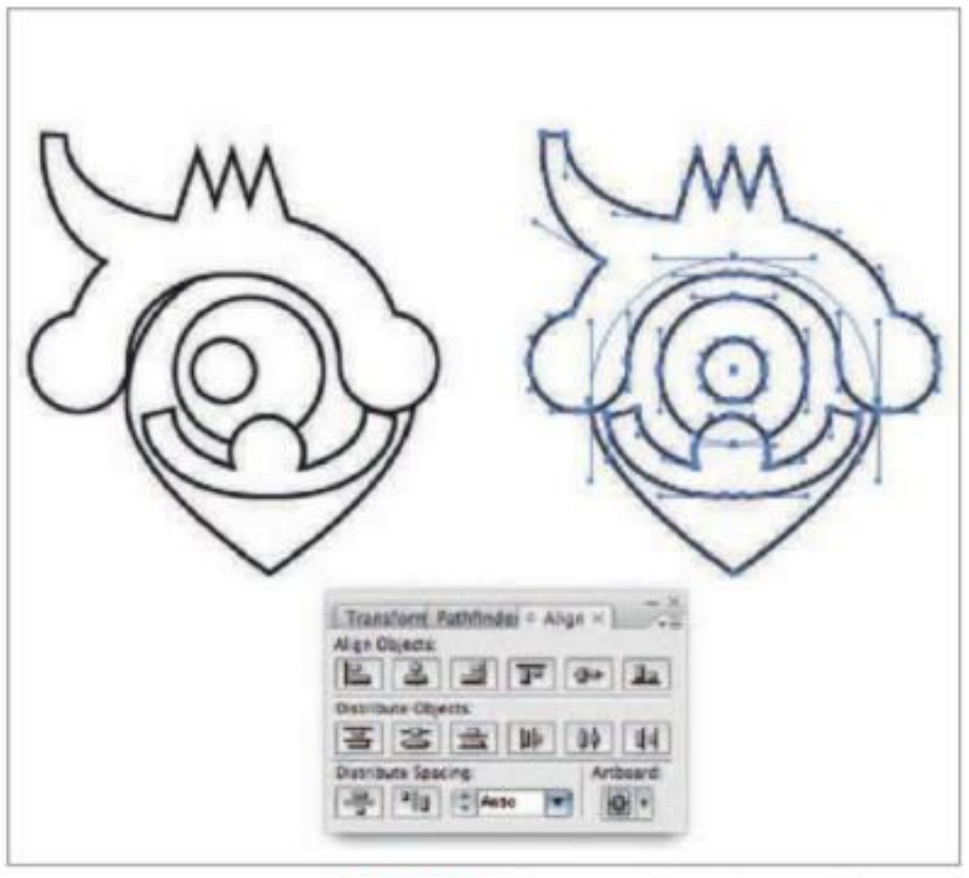


STEP 03 Now name your layer 'doll' and begin to draw out the overall outline of the doll. Use the Custom Shape tool to draw out the foundation shapes and apply the merge option found within the Pathfinder tool (**Shift + Cmd/Ctrl + F9**) to combine various shapes together.



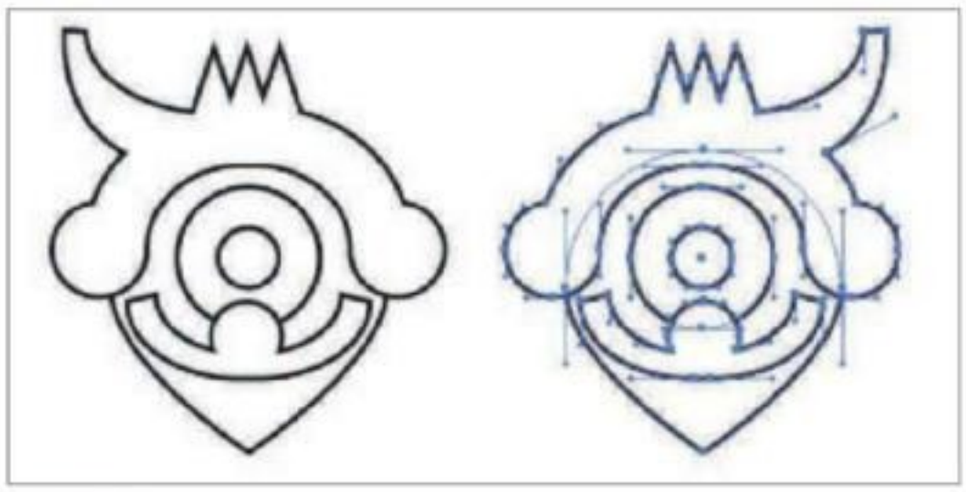
STEP 04 Establish the key elements of the illustration, such as the facial features, arms and so on. Don't worry about the intricate details – you'll focus on these later on.

For now look closely at the key features and make sure that the aesthetic of the shapes you're using is in keeping with your initial sketches.

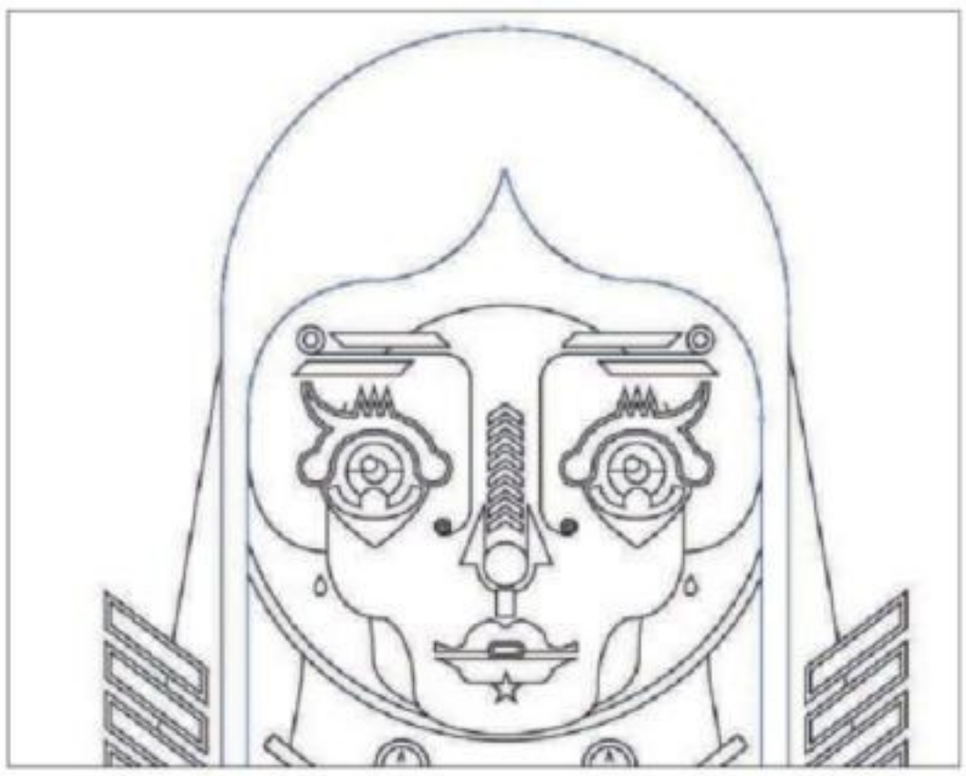


STEP 05 When creating shapes that require absolute precision the Align panel (**Shift + F7**) is your best friend: this is the best way to get absolute symmetry within your work.

Just remember to specify whether you're aligning groups of shapes to one another or to the artboard in general.

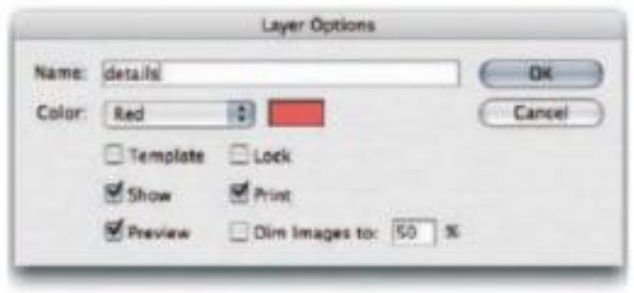


STEP 06 Group any elements that appear in pairs – such as eyes – and use the Reflect tool (**Object > Transform > Reflect**). Make sure you reflect vertically, and set the desired distance required between the eyes using the arrow keys. Group similar objects to make navigating the Layers palette easier.



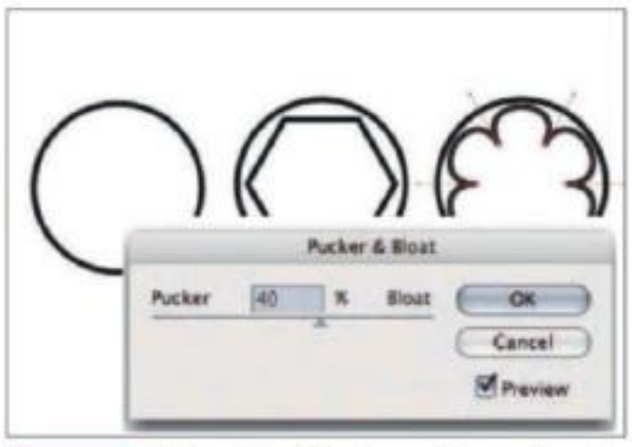
STEP 07 Once all the key elements are in place it's time to think about colour. Take your time when picking the colour palette: I tend to work with a limited palette as I feel it gives more balance to the overall illustration – but working with a small palette means it's even more important that you choose the right colours.

STEP 08 Now apply your chosen colours to the illustration. Make sure that the right colours are in the right place: this is very important – placing colours badly can break the flow of the illustration. Use lighter colours to highlight, darker colours for the base shapes and midtone colours to add depth and feel.



STEP 09 Now let's move onto adding detail. Lock all the current layers (select the layers you want to lock and hit **Cmd/Ctrl + 2**), then create a new layer and name it 'details'.

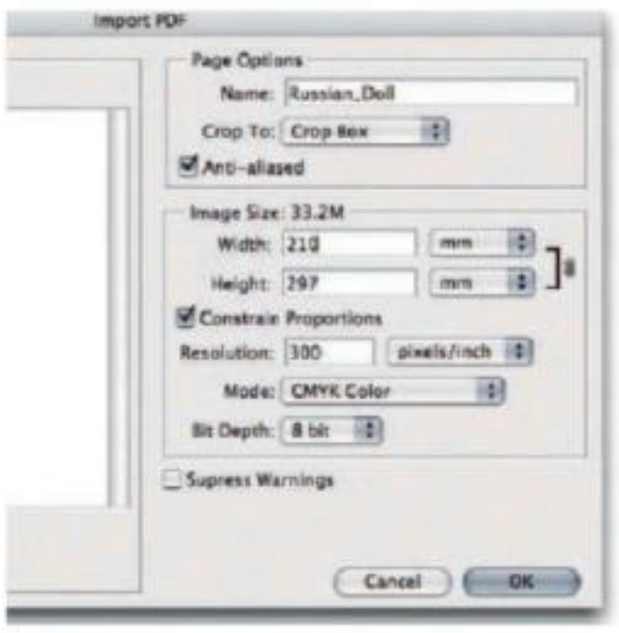
Refer back to your sketches or reference images for ideas for shapes and begin creating your own to use for details: in the next step I'll show you how I created a floral-inspired shape.



STEP 10 Using the Custom Shape tool, create a circle (hold down **Alt/Opt** to retain proportion), create a hexagon within the circle then go to **Effect > Distort & Transform > Pucker & Bloat** adjust accordingly. Experiment to see what new shapes you come up with.

Sometimes the most interesting shapes come about by accident – just be sure to regularly use the Align to Center feature from the Align palette to keep your shapes in check.

STEP 11 Make sure every detail is accounted for and the illustration is coloured in to your satisfaction. It's now time to export the image to Photoshop, so lock all the layers and save (**Cmd/Ctrl + S**).



STEP 12 Launch Photoshop and open (**Cmd/Ctrl + O**) your file. A dialog will pop up and give you some importing options. Make sure you choose the correct source to import from and double-check that the dimensions of the image match the dimensions when you first started in Illustrator.

STEP 13 Flatten the illustration and minimise the window to concentrate on texture. You can find free textures on the Internet but I recommend forming your own personal stock library of textures and grains to call upon when needed – such as this one. It's in the project files and called *texture.jpg*.

STEP 14 Open the desired texture and select the whole image (**Cmd/Ctrl + A**), copy the selection (**Cmd/Ctrl + C**), close the texture window and paste (**Cmd/Ctrl + V**) the texture on top of your doll. Desaturate the texture (**Shift + Cmd/Ctrl + U**) and lower the opacity to 30-40%.

STEP 15 Start merging the texture with your illustration by using the various blending modes located directly under the Layers panel. Different modes will have different effects, so raise or lower the opacity of selected blending modes until you find a mode that complements the overall illustration.

STEP 16 Once you're happy with the image and feel that it reflects the theme you're illustrating, use the Layers drop-down menu to flatten the image (**Layers > Flatten Image**). ■

INFO JONNY WAN

Sheffield-based freelance illustrator Jonny Wan graduated from the Manchester School of Art in 2008 and has dedicated a lot of time to developing his distinctive style. He says: "Through my fascination with urban art, shape experimentation, colour and texture I have created a style that's unique to me, which can be applied to a varied range of commissions."

CONTACT
- *jonnywan.com*

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 3 hours

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

Transform lolly sticks to textures

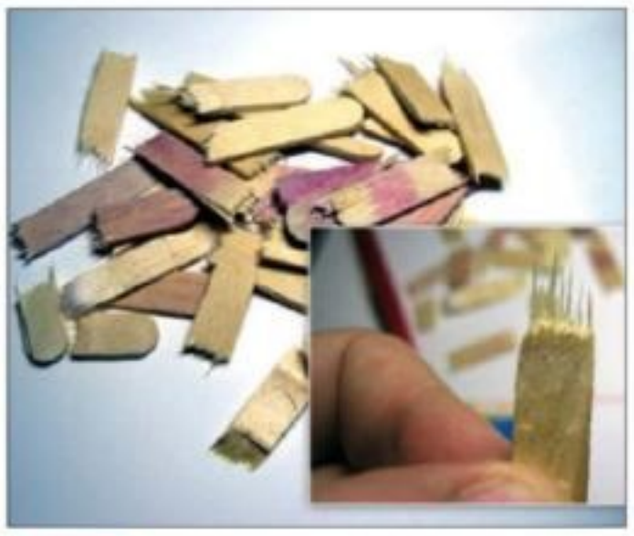
Turn disposable objects into textures with these tips from **Von Glitschka**

Are you inspired by the mundane? The seemingly normal everyday things you come across? If not you should be, because what may appear to be nothing, can be turned into something unique.

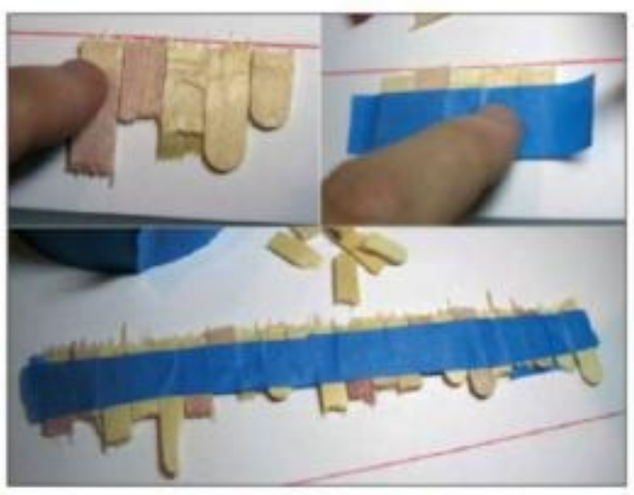
Training yourself to be a good everyday observer and asking yourself questions such as "What else could I do with that?" will help you develop your art and unleash the potential of ordinary items; you don't know how you could use something you've overlooked a thousand times to your creative advantage unless you let yourself experiment.

We're going to take some things that most people throw away immediately – lolly sticks – and turn them into a design resource you'll be able to use in personal and professional projects. It's not hard, and there's no secret – other than a willingness to live a creatively curious life.

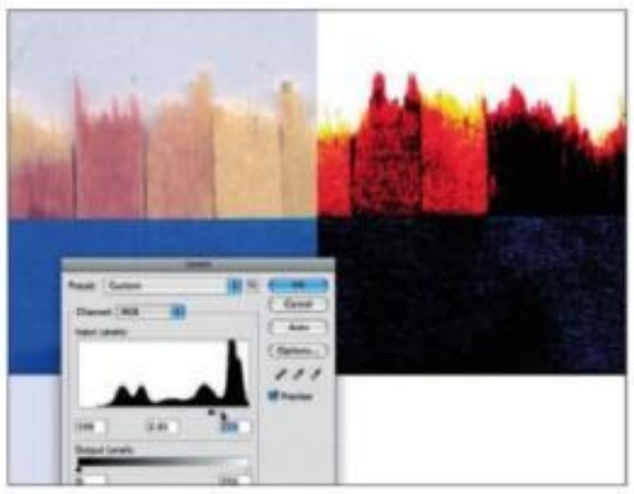
STEP 01 For years I threw lolly sticks in the bin. Then one day I noticed they created a cool edge when broken, so I started saving them. You'll need a good handful before you can create the edge we're after.



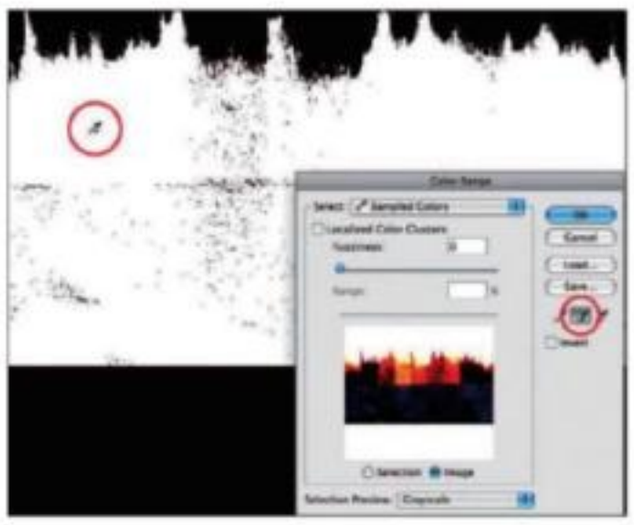
STEP 02 When you've got enough lolly sticks saved up, snap them to create nice fractured edges. I find that breaking them slowly creates more interesting splintering.



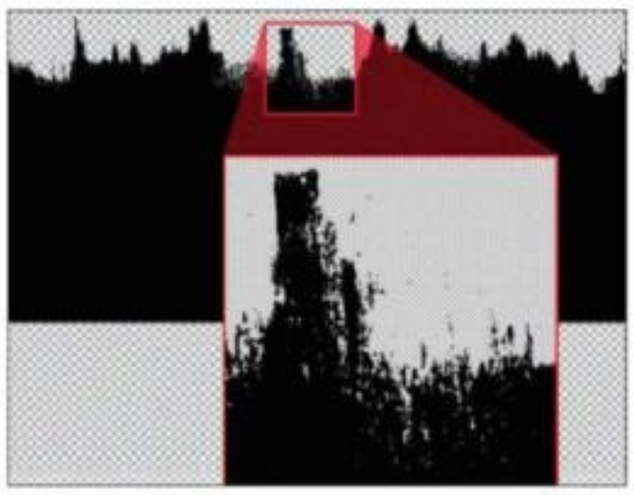
STEP 03 Draw a rule on some paper and align your broken edges. Vary the sizing so you create plenty of character with the edge. Tape your broken pieces together to make scanning them easier. Scan in your edge as an RGB TIFF image at 100%, set the resolution to at least 600dpi, and save it to your desktop.



STEP 04 Open your scanned image in Photoshop, and using the Levels palette (**Cmd/Ctrl + L**) adjust the image so you blow out details darkening the darks and lightening the lights until you have a posterised look (as shown in the image). You can also experiment further with levels to retain more mid-tones, if that's the look you're after. For this resource I wanted a high-contrast edge with almost no alpha pixels.



STEP 05 Open the Color Range palette (**Select > Color Range**) and using the default setting of Sampled Colors, click on the Add to Sample eyedropper under the Save button. Use the eyedropper to sample the colours in your image, creating the mask you'll use to create your final edge shape. Leave some small artifacts in your image, so that it looks more authentic and distressed.



STEP 06 A new selection based on your colour-range work is now loaded, so create a new layer (**Shift + Cmd/Ctrl + N**) and fill (**Shift + F5**) the new transparent layer with black. Note the degraded edge with subtle distressed detail you've created.

You now have your base art done and can design whatever type of edge motif you'd like.

TIP

› When you're making your selection in Step 5, you can toggle to the Subtract from Sample eyedropper under the Save button to add back in something you might have removed. Experiment until you get a good feel for how it works. If you make a mistake just click the Cancel button and try again.

STEP 07 In this project I created a 8.5 x 11-inch frame using my edge. I cloned the edge layer (**Cmd/Ctrl + J**), rotated it (**Edit > Transform > Rotate**), and positioned it along the sides, to form the edged frame. Use the Clone Stamp tool (**S**), to alter some of the detail on three of the sides, so it doesn't look as though you're using the same edge.

STEP 08 This shows a photo of mine masked within the framed edge I created. It's fun to find new uses for mundane things. In this case we took something disposable and recycled it into a creative and unique design tool. ■

INFO VON GLITSCHKA

› Von Glitschka is principal of Glitschka Studios, and has worked in the industry for more than 23 years. He describes himself as an 'illustrative designer', and is always looking for an excuse to be creative.

CONTACT
- *vonglitschka.com*

SOFTWARE
- Photoshop

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 1–2 hours

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

LEARN 3D PAPERCRAFT

Design a pop-up illustration

Simon Wild brings a youthful character art-driven style to a grown-up project

Pop-up illustrations have always been traditionally reserved for children's books, although often admired for their tactile and physical qualities. It is now widely accepted for illustrators and designers working across the creative industry to adopt pop-up and 3D techniques to add flair to their visual concepts.

Pop-ups can add a sense of playfulness to your work. They can also offer an element of surprise and interaction – and it can be very exciting to open out a pop-up spread and see the artwork spring to life in front of your eyes.

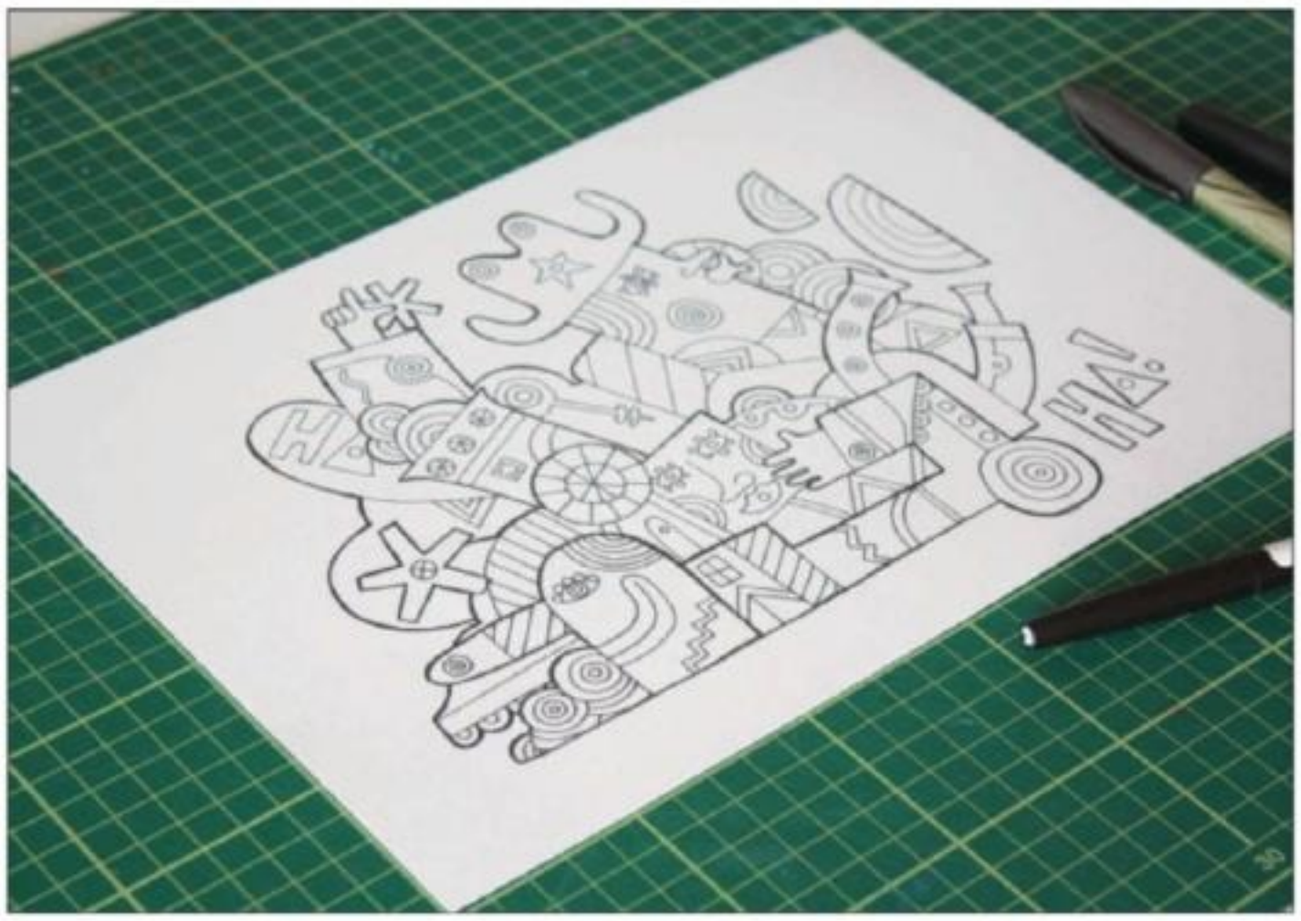
In this tutorial you will explore how to combine Photoshop's tools with traditional pop-up techniques as a starting point to plan, modify and transform your 2D artwork into a fully functional pop-up spread. With practice and a little more experimentation you can go on to create elaborate 3D masterpieces that breath new life into your artwork, literally giving it a new dimension.

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop

PROJECT FILES
- Templates for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*



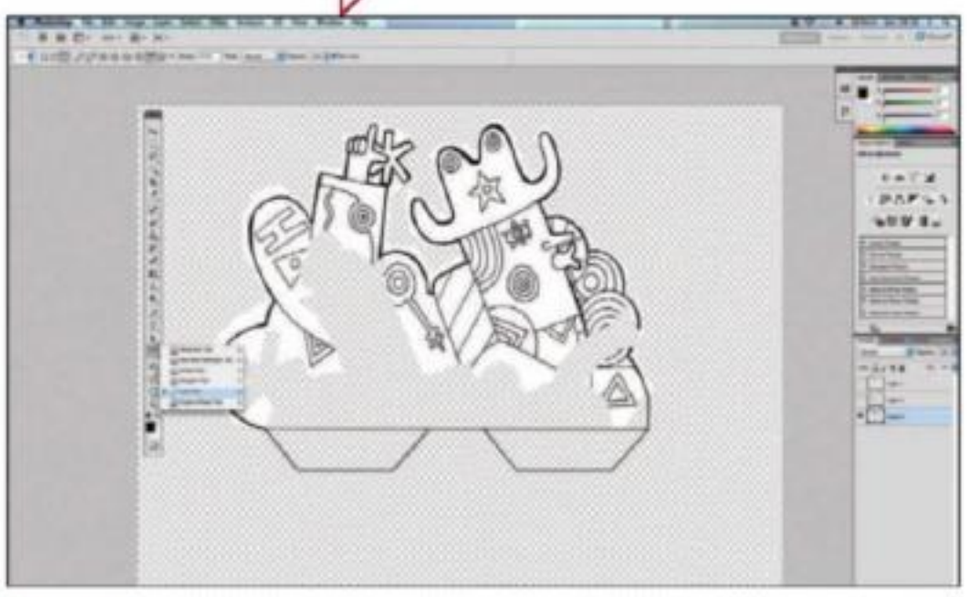
STEP 01 The transition from 2D artwork to 3D should always be tested to make sure everything works properly. With that in mind, it's best to start by planning a dummy version of your pop up first. Begin with a piece of hand-drawn artwork and scan it into Photoshop at 300dpi, making sure all the artwork sits comfortably within an A4 landscape canvas. If you create artwork digitally with a graphics tablet then you can go straight to using that.

STEP 02 Now separate the artwork into layers using the Magnetic Lasso tool with the Edge Contrast set at 10%. Look for natural horizons within your artwork. With the Selection tool active, **right-click** and select **Layer via Cut**. This will separate your selection onto a new layer. Repeat that a couple of times until your artwork is divided. There will be gaps in your artwork at this stage but don't worry about those for now, they can be corrected later.

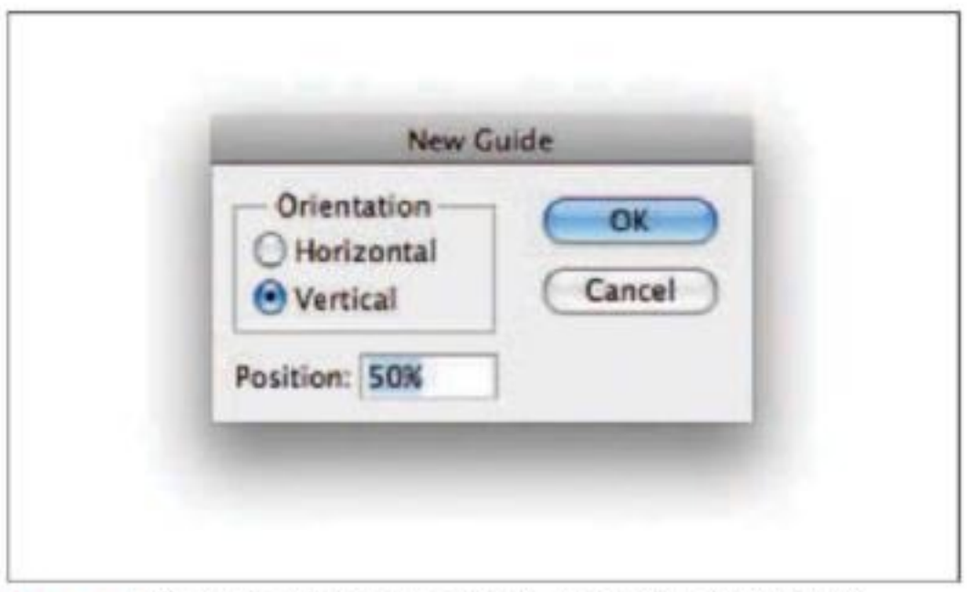
PERFECT FOLDS AND SCORES

› The folds and scores should work properly before you glue anything down. Use the grid on a cutting mat to find perfect horizontal and vertical score lines. A rubber-based metal ruler also reduces the risk of your artwork slipping as you cut.

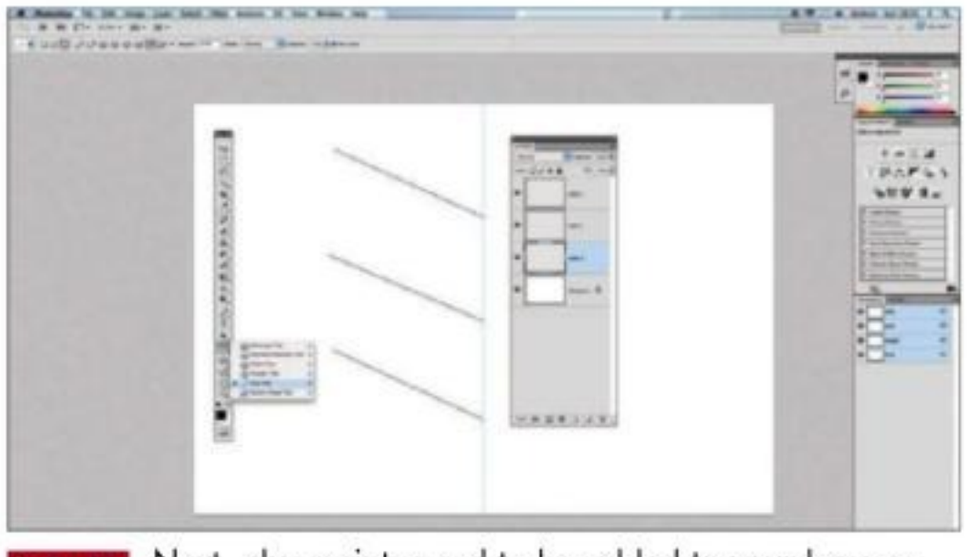
"Look for natural horizons in your artwork that can be separated into layers using Magnetic Lasso"



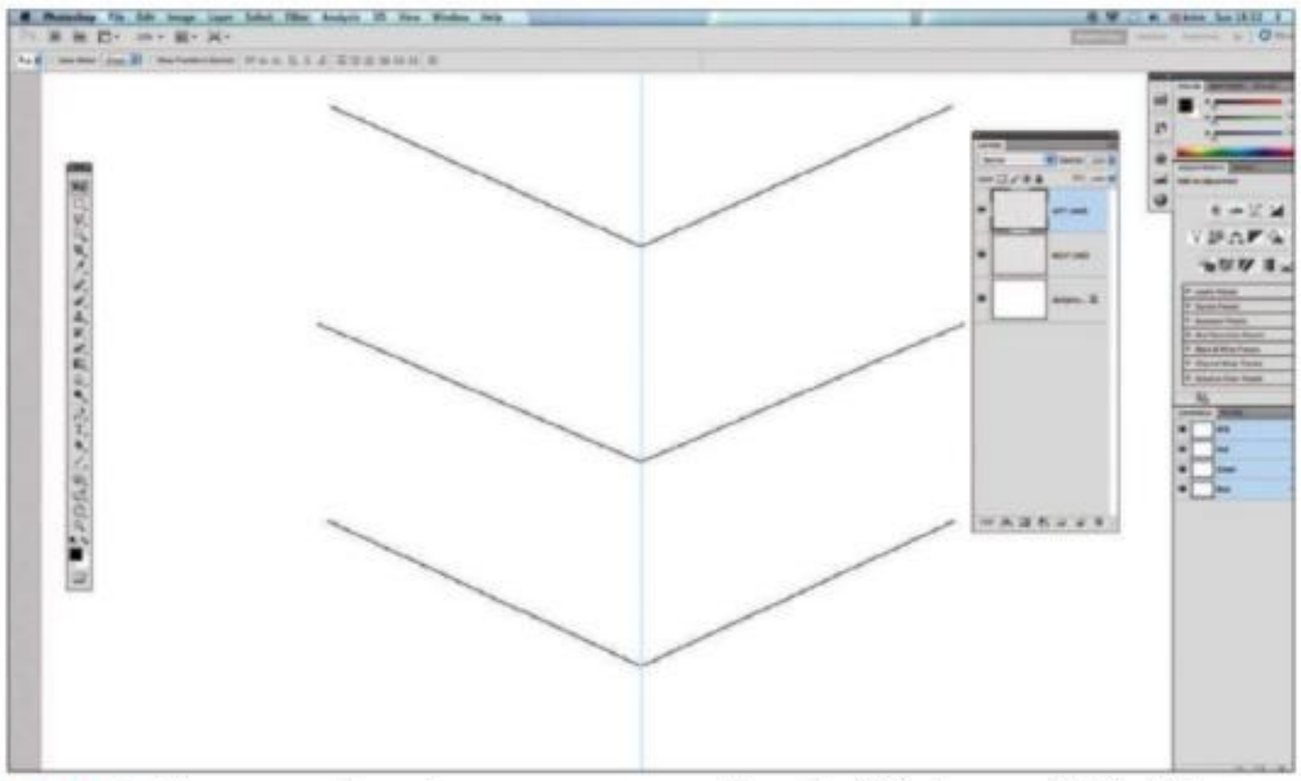
STEP 03 These layers will form your 'pops'. They will need tabs to stand up, which will be glued later to your base. Select the Line tool and set it to a width of 10px. Draw two simple tab shapes at the base of your artwork. Holding down **Shift** while you click and drag will snap the line horizontally and diagonally.



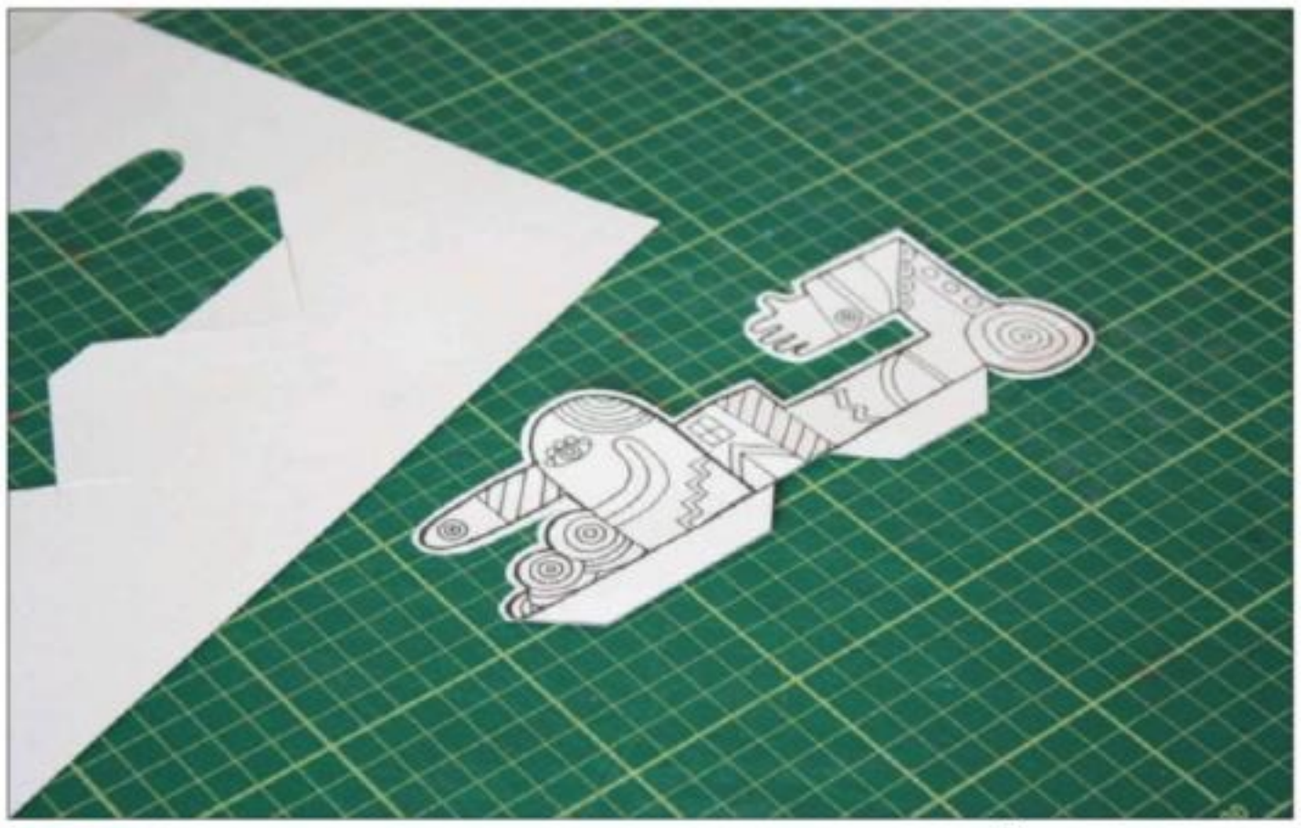
STEP 04 To make the base, create a new landscape A4 canvas at 300dpi. Next you will need to mark out the centre fold. Go to **View > New Guide** and set it to 50%. This will place a guide in the centre of your canvas, from which all your pops will function.



STEP 05 Next, glue points need to be added to your base so your pops can be positioned correctly. For this you are going to use a variation of the 'mountain fold' technique. This is where the pop folds away from you. From the centre fold guide, draw a diagonal line on a new layer. Copy the layer twice and position the lines underneath at equal distances. ›

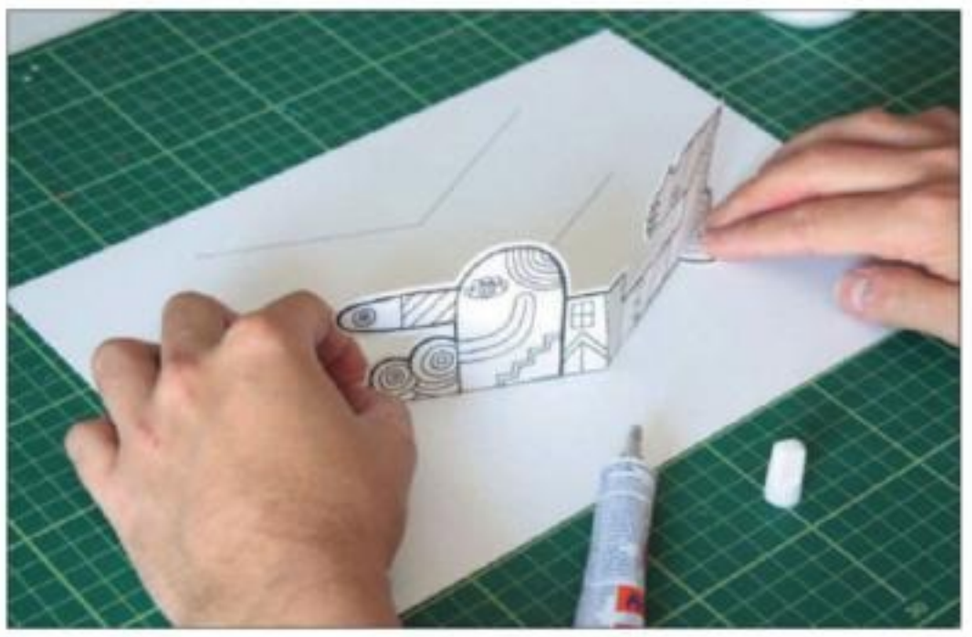


STEP 06 Merge your three layers together. Copy that layer and flip it horizontally. Reposition it so that it creates three 'V' shapes that point down into the centre fold. Link both layers and position the 'V' shapes slightly higher, so they are top-heavy in the canvas. This will ensure that your pops are more accurately positioned when the base is folded in half.



STEP 07 Print out your pops. Measure the width of the artwork to find the centre and create a vertical score line. This is best done by pressing gently with the wrong side of a scalpel blade. The grid on the cutting mat is useful for lining up your artwork to find an accurate vertical centre line.

STEP 08 Print out your base. It will need to move freely when folded so the whole pop-up functions well. Score the base along the centre line and fold it a couple of times so it finds its natural resting position.



STEP 09 Glue the pops to your base along the V-shape glue points. Conceal the tabs by gluing them away from you behind the artwork. Work from the front of the spread to the back, as this will provide more room for your hands to position the artwork. Allow a little time for the glue to dry.

STEP 10 It's important to view your dummy pop-up from a variety of angles to make sure that the pops are the right size and working well against one another. At this stage you may need to trim and rework the shapes of your pops if they are too big. Other elements from the original artwork have also been added to the base.

STEP 11 Make sure that your dummy folds and works properly, so that the pops do not catch on one another. Most traditional pop-up book spreads protect the pops within the dimensions of the page. You may wish to challenge this convention depending on the nature of your artwork, so the artwork spills from the edges of the pages when they are closed. Experiment with the sizes and shapes of your pops to achieve this.

PAPERWEIGHT

› Pop-ups need to withstand a lot of usage. For this pop-up spread I used a 240gsm A4 satin photo-inkjet paper. It keeps pop-ups robust and it also gives a high quality finish that reduces light glare.

STEP 12 When your dummy is working the way you want it, it's time to finish the artwork and re-draw in the gaps that have been left behind. As you are converting 2D artwork into 3D shapes, it is important that the artwork on each pop is complete as you will be able to see through and beyond each pop as it sits on the base.

STEP 13 Now add the artwork to your base. Drag and drop the artwork onto your base canvas. In the Layers panel change the blending mode to Multiply so that your glue points are made visible on the artwork. Print out the base.

STEP 14 Print out your pops using a thick paper stock and cut them out. Leaving a small white edge will enhance the definition of your pops when you glue them in place later. Measure the width of each pop to find the centre line. Score the centre line and the tabs.

STEP 15 Score the centre line of your base and fold it back and forth a couple of times so it finds its natural resting position. This helps to release any unwanted tension on the pops when the base is folded shut.

STEP 16 Glue all the pops to the base in the same way you did with the dummy. Experiment further with different score lines or maybe holes in the artwork that you can see through. There are so many possibilities! ■

PROFILE SIMON WILD

Simon Wild is an illustrator with a passion for telling whimsical little stories. Using drawing, collage and digital ink, Simon is inspired by play, travel and film soundtracks, creating a world of colourful explosions and childlike expressions. A love of the fantastical is a recurring theme in his work. He has worked for clients such as Macmillan Children's Books, The Big Chill festival ActionAid and Tate Britain.

CONTACT

- *simonwild.com*

Simon's *Utopias Neon* (*above*) capture the unique collage style that has led to Wild securing his first book deal, *Fantastical Flying Machines*, out now through Macmillan.

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 3 hours, excluding drawing time

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

LEARN MONTAGE TECHNIQUES

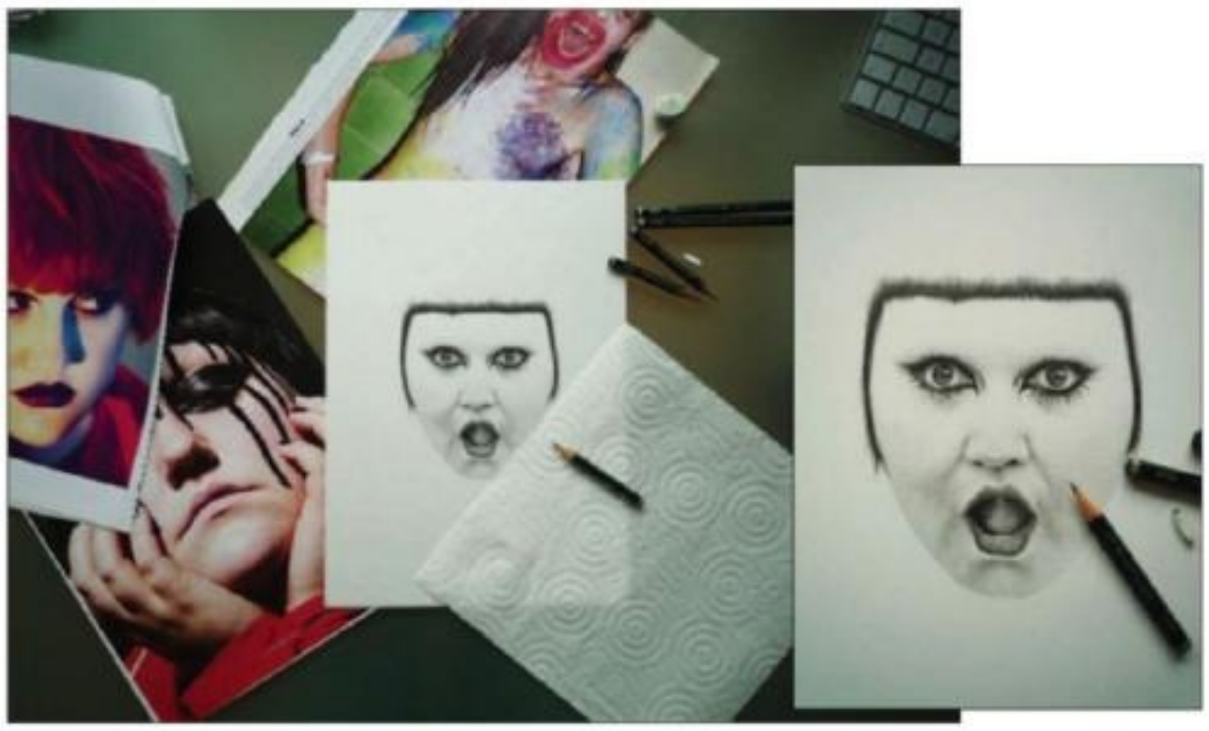
Create a mixed-media portrait

Paul Holland combines pencil drawings with the power of Photoshop to create a unique look

Paul Holland's work is often figurative. He draws with a range of regular pencils (from 5H to 6B, he says), as well as pulling out his pens and paintbrush. He then brings the results into Photoshop, where he adds components and applies colour and textures, digitally enhancing the final visual through the use of some classically inspired montage techniques.

Here Paul demonstrates how he went about producing a portrait of singer Beth Ditto for an editorial illustration. He hopes the tutorial will inspire you to explore the endless possibilities available in software. The techniques outlined here aren't complex. What's more, they maintain the integrity of the original hand drawing, preserving the artist's style and individuality.

Having followed this tutorial, you should be able to take a drawing and turn it into something that's not only stunning but also worthy of being used for a commercial project.

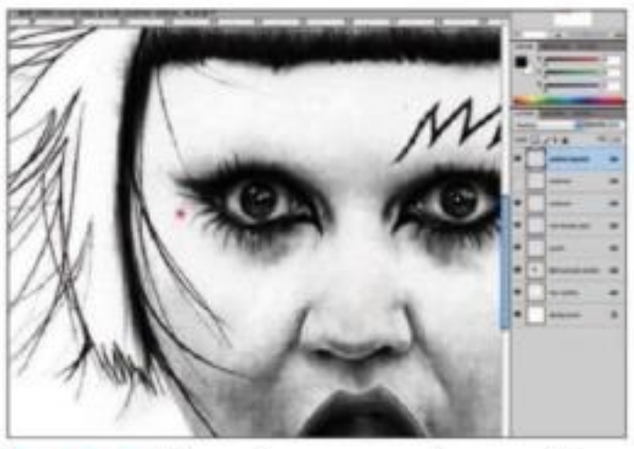


STEP 01 Before you start, remember to consider how your drawings will be manipulated once scanned. You must ensure that what you produce is versatile enough for the purposes you have in mind.

I work from a range of reference photos of my subject. I start by drawing just the face, which I scan into Photoshop (you should use a resolution of at least 300dpi for this key element). The hair and other elements will be drawn individually and saved in separate layers in Photoshop.

STEP 02 Along with the main image, I scan an outline of the hair in pencil, putting this in its own layer. This outline is fairly rough as I want the hair to appear as realistic as possible, so I don't want a hard edge. I also trace any outlines I needed to work within, such as the edges of the lips, and put them in their own layers.

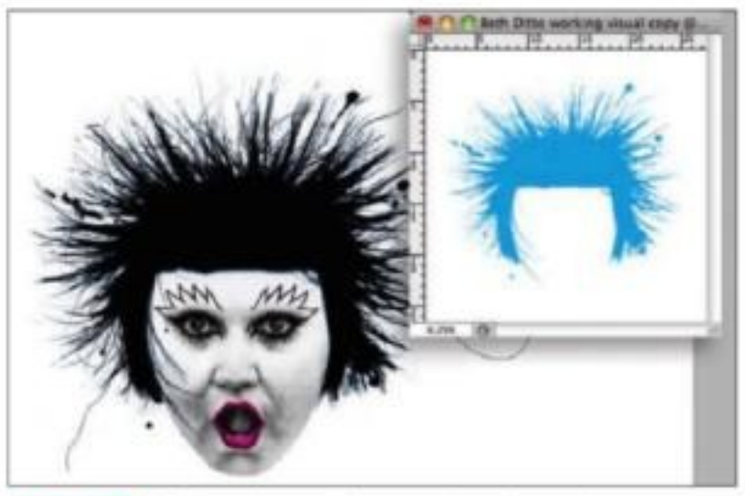
To get a strong black-and-white main image for this work, I also altered the contrast using **Image > Adjustments > Selective Color**, then adjusting whites, neutrals and blacks.



STEP 03 I then drew an eyebrow with a pencil crayon (doing it by hand gives a softer, more realistic look). This was scanned in, copied and flipped horizontally for the other eyebrow. With the Elliptical Marquee tool (**M**), I added small solid white circles over the eyes to make them pop. These sit on their own layer above the portrait's layer.

STEP 04 Hair can be tricky. I often collage photographs of hair and create the desired shape myself using layers. As mentioned earlier, I want the result to appear lifelike and to have some sense of movement if possible. Therefore I'm not too concerned about the quality or resolution of the images I use; the result just needs to create a sense of depth and softness. Above you can see how I built up the hair from elements scanned into layers with different opacity levels.

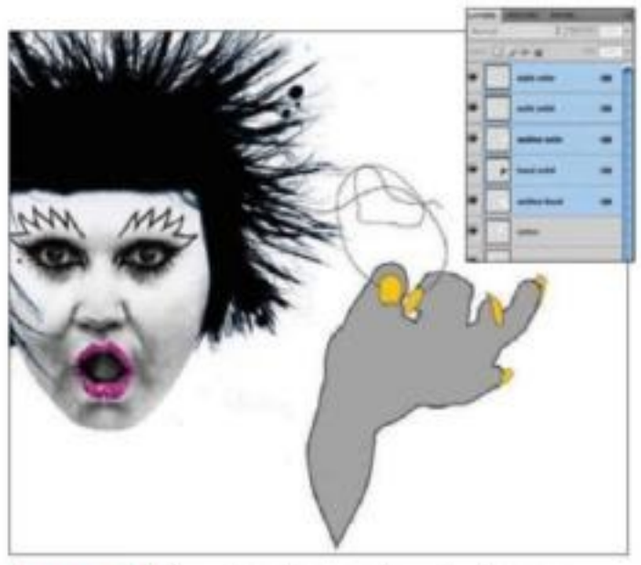
› As I'd traced the lips' outline, I could easily make them pink by creating a clipping mask layer above, making it pink and then using a Multiply blending mode with 100% opacity.



STEP 05 When I was happy, I selected the hair layers and did **Layers > Merge Layers**. I gave the result an extra colour dimension: I chose a blue, applied as a Linear Burn at 100% opacity over the original hair. This effect was used elsewhere to add depth and a hint of colour.

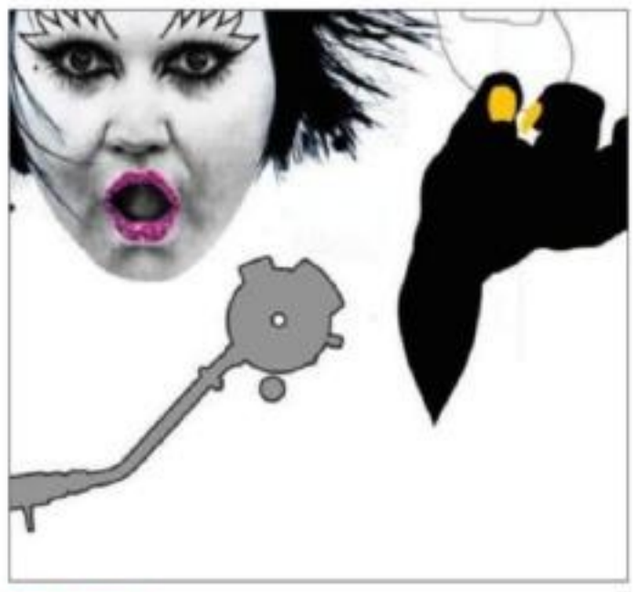
BEST TO DO IT BY HAND

› Wherever possible, I like to draw all of the main elements by hand. The results maintain an identity and the artist's unique mark-making skills when scanned in. When these drawings sit alongside digital components, the overall effect pops right out.



STEP 06 The hand was hand-drawn and scanned into Photoshop. And as before, I created an outline as well as a solid form. This means that the shape is more flexible and easily selected when passing certain elements in front of or behind it.

I also experimented with a photograph of glitter over the lips, using a Lighten blending mode at 100% opacity.

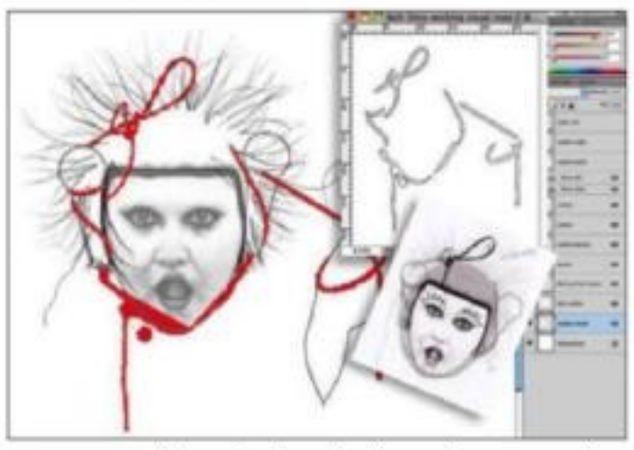


STEP 07 The record deck's arm was created in the same way as the hand. I've adjusted the opacity of the solid form to show you how the outline and solid elements interact. When positioned in the finished image, it will look similar to the final hand shape shown.

STEP 08 I scanned the drawing of the microphone shown and treated it as I did the portrait, adjusting the contrast and creating an outline of it.

Incidentally, to make it easier to find and manipulate elements, I usually group all the layers of one particular element together.

STEP 09 Once the microphone had colour applied, I duplicated it to produce a pair that I arranged on either side of the face. I also added in shadows cast by the face, making the mikes appear as if sitting within the hair. I then added a duplicate layer of the original hair over the microphones, plus reflections to lend the work a three-dimensional quality.



STEP 10 Now I sketched and scanned in a microphone cable, putting it in its own layer. I left some gaps in the cable where I wanted it to appear blocked by other elements.

STEP 11 We want to make it look like the cable is wound tightly around the head and microphones and tangled up in the hair. As I'd put outlines around each of the elements, it was easy to achieve this by selectively erasing parts of the cable – for example, those that overlapped the face.

When working this way, remember that you can invert the selection where necessary, erasing or masking parts of the image as you wish.

STEP 12 The necklace in the illustration was inspired by lyrics from Beth Ditto's material. The text was drawn freehand, scanned and then coloured. I also overlaid a gold leaf texture – created by scanning an actual piece of gold leaf – and added some lighting effects as with the microphones. I played with layer effects and opacity until I had the look I wanted.

STEP 13 The necklace's chain was originally a photograph of a silver chain, scanned and saved as a monotone image. I contorted the chain using **Edit > Transform > Warp**, applied colour and added a shadow so as to give the necklace a more three-dimensional look.

STEP 14 Finally, I zoomed in and cleaned up any areas where the different elements didn't intersect correctly. With all the components together, I could also make any tweaks that I felt the composition needed.

To finalise the portrait, I linked all the layers together and saved out the finished piece. ■

PROFILE PAUL HOLLAND

Paul Holland is an English graphic artist who relocated to Paris in December 2005. A graduate in illustration of Kingston University, Paul has also applied his techniques to skin, working as a tattoo artist while still living in the UK. He is fascinated by popular culture, and his mark-making methods are witty and often boast unique twists. Paul has been freelance since his move to France.

CONTACT

- *paulholland.co.uk*

Above top *GaGa* (self-initiated).
Above Sleeve design for Simon Amstell's *Do Nothing Live* DVD, released last year.

CHAPTER 3

PORTRAITS

BRING PEOPLE TO LIFE IN YOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

Main image Twiggy by Stanley Chow.

Above & top right Scarlett Johannson and Irina Lazreanu, by Anje Jager.

Below & below right Work for HSBC and art director Anna-Pi Lennstrand, by Annelie Carlström.

ILLUSTRATED PORTRAITS

Michael Burns discovers the secrets of achieving captivating faces, perfect poses and a sense of personality

The best portraits – whether editorial illustrations of celebrities, advertising drawing based on models, fine art portraiture or any other artwork with a person as the central subject – not only represent an individual's defining physical characteristics in an instantly recognisable fashion, but their personality too.

So what is the secret of convincing portraiture, whether done digitally or in traditional media or a mixture of the two? And how important is it that depictions be faithful to the subject, or is there a great deal of latitude in terms of personal interpretation? We talked to a group of leading illustrators to find out. Predictably, there was no outright consensus, though everyone offered useful individual insights into how they produce memorable work.

When drawing or painting a face, Finnish illustrator Anje Jager (*anjejager.com*) advises that you first look carefully at the face, not just as a whole but also as several forms together – eyes, nose, mouth, etc – plus darks and lights, "almost more as objects than as a face". You should also ask yourself, she says, "What's an important feature

Top Sister's portrait by Minni Havas.

Above A club poster by Miika Saksi.

Above right A work by Miika meant to recall Lady Gaga.

of the person? What does he stand for, and how can I bring this out in the way he looks? Can I exaggerate something in the face just a little bit that makes this feature come out more? Can I leave out something that distracts, that is not important?"

These questions matter whether you're drawing totally freehand, using reference shots or tracing a photo. How you build the strokes and lines, and which features and aspects you choose to include, mark out how the subject will be perceived.

Dutch-born, Helsinki-based illustrator Vincent Bakkum (*saintjustine.com*) paints beautiful and exotic portraits of women on "preferably big" canvases using acrylics. He starts out by taking black-and-white photos of his models and working from these.

"I'm not interested in the life someone has lived," he says. "I'm taken by the outlines, the graphic value of someone's features. I'm drawn to lips, eyelashes, hair, the smoothness of skin. A face or a body are graphical values to me."

Study and sketch

"I draw every face a bit odd and not exactly how it is supposed to be," says Swedish artist Annelie Carlström (*anneliecarlstrom.blogspot.com*), who lives in Stockholm. "But I study every detail in the face very closely. I start with one eye, then the nose, then the mouth, then the other eye and then the skin, and the shape of the face."

No matter what the artist's medium of choice is, the sketch is key to a successful portrait.

"I try to have a general idea of what I want to achieve before I put anything down," says Malaysian-born Schin Loong (*schin-art.com*). "It doesn't have to be perfect – an expression I want to nail, or a colour palette or just a general concept, is helpful. Then I sketch it out on paper with a pencil, scan it in and clean up the line art using Photoshop."

Annelie also uses Photoshop "to lay bare the drawing" and for its cloning tools, but she starts by drawing with a 0.3mm propelling pencil.

"Pencil is, in my opinion, the best material to work in when you are doing detailed portraits," she says.

Below & bottom
Joan of Arc and *Discover a Muse*, by Michael C Hayes.

PROFILE AND PROCESS

PETER JAMES FIELD

Peter James Field graduated in 2005 from the University of Brighton with a degree in illustration. His clients include the BBC and many leading newspapers and magazines.

To generate ideas, Field will often start by juxtaposing different bits of reference material or pre-existing sketches and textures. "Very often I start with a collage, sometimes digital, sometimes analogue, which I then draw from using traditional materials. I also do lots of very straightforward naturalistic sketches from my own reference photos or, where possible, from direct observation."

His work is completely hand-drawn, but digital processes figure highly. "When I scan the collaged reference material, I often make big changes to the contrast or colours of the original sketch before it's suitable to send to a client," he says. "Sometimes I spend many hours in Photoshop cleaning up and perfecting the appearance of a sketch. Often I also digitally combine several drawn elements or background textures."

Working from reference pictures does have its drawbacks, he says. "Some sitters would be insulted to have their own personal uniqueness edited, whereas others may expect flattery as a matter of course. Asking before you start can save a lot of trouble later on."

Above *Tourists* and *John*, by Peter James Field.

"Lie. If you're doing a portrait of a person who doesn't look interesting, you can make eyes bigger and brighter, and so on"
MIIKA SAKSI

"There are so many variations of grey tones."

When Italian artist Oscar Diadoro (*odd-house.com*) is commissioned to do a portrait, he works from a photo while first sketching on paper to study the composition. "Once I'm satisfied, I digitise the sketch and start retracing it," he explains. "I put the source image in a layer and reduce the opacity to 50 per cent. This helps me to distinguish the lines from the image itself. While retracing with the Pen tool, I work in outline view to have the background image always visible.

"I work only with strokes to 'ink' the illustration at first, then outline the strokes to work on details and smooth lines. Once I've got the black-and-white version, I start colouring. Every colour is set in a separate layer and I use the colour swatches in Global mode, so I can adjust or change colours without selecting every shape individually."

Illustrator Peter James Field (*peterjamesfield.co.uk*) uses pencil, colour pencils or paint for his portraits or figure pieces, although digital processes in Photoshop are also very important to the development and delivery of his art.

Working mainly from photos for his commercial art, he acknowledges that producing a drawn portrait from a photographic reference can be a challenge. "I always start by looking carefully at the reference picture, converting it to greyscale and making sure that there's a good contrast

Vincent Bakkum's Altinaï

Altinaï, an acryclic-on-canvas work, is based on a photo Vincent Bakkum took "ages ago". The 140 x 140cm painting sold almost immediately when first exhibited.

The subject "resembles a Montenegrin princess in exile I met years ago at a party in Paris", says Bakkum. "Her name was Altinaï. A name for a mythological lady."

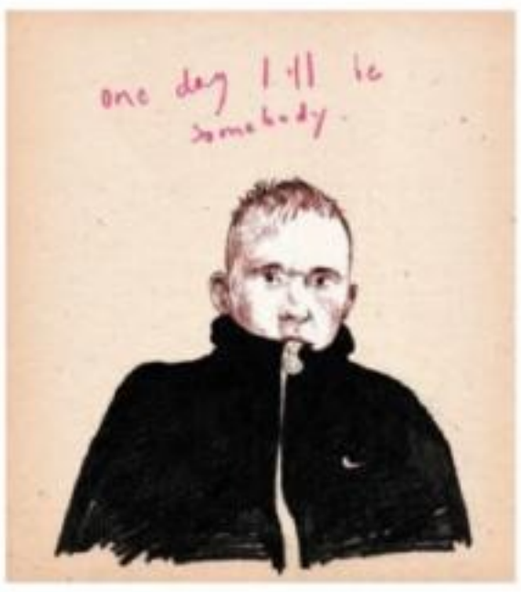
1 "First I drew her [based on the photograph], gave her some highlights and was very pleased with the composition and her looks, but I needed to add drama to the backdrop."

2 "Since I can't paint landscapes – my brushes turn all panoramas into pea soup – nor interiors, nor sports cars or racehorses, I always need some kind of 'wallpaper' to finish a painting."

3 "I borrowed some floral elements from a Dutch master. The beauty and serenity of these flowers behind her give her something untouchable."

4 "The soil I grew up in was Catholic, so I made her a saint. The gold leaf gave even more stature to her presence."

5 "A bird design on her dress, and *Altinaï* was ready to be shown to wherever I was taking her."



Above, left to right *Guilty* and *Silvia* by Oscar Diodoro; *Somebody* and Ronnie Corbett by Peter James Field.

between the lightest areas of the face and the shaded areas.

"I'll alter the contrast to make the facial features stand out, using a shade range between pure white and very dark grey," he continues. "I also make sure that all areas of the photo reference are visible.

"For example, sometimes the contrast on the face is perfect, but the person has dark hair against a dark background and the texture of the hair isn't really visible. I'll lasso that particular section of the photo and tweak the contrast of that specific bit."

For fleshing out a portrait, Finnish artist Minni Havas (*pekkafinland.fi/minnihavas*) recommends starting from your faintest colours and carefully adding them from lighter to darker on top of each other. "That way you can still make corrections to the image while drawing," she explains. "When I draw or paint skin, I keep in mind that human skin is translucent and covers blue and reddish blood vessels. So the skin isn't monotone.

"I never use black for shadows on skin or textile," she adds. "Instead I use complementary colours mixed with darker shades of the base hue."

Cardiff-based illustrator Kath Morgan (*kafine-ated.net*) uses a technique of working upwards through the levels of detail for both digital painting and acrylic. "What this means is that I'll start out by blocking in the main areas of light, dark and colour, making sure that all

PROFILE AND PROCESS

MINNI HAVAS

Minni Havas studied fashion design at the University of Art and Design Helsinki in Finland, and has been a commercial illustrator for three years. Her portraits begin with her sketching the composition, she says. "I then collect photos for the montage I am going to make, especially if it is a whole-body image. I take a hand from one image, a face from another, and the hair from somewhere else. I basically create a new picture that resembles the one I have in mind. I make my drawing based on the montage I made. I then scan the finished drawing and join the parts together."

"The picture is most likely to lose its delicate shades when I scan it, so I try to restore the authenticity of the colouring digitally. In some cases I merge patterns and structures from the original photograph to the drawing. My goal, though, is always to keep the feeling that the picture is completely hand-drawn."

It's also essential to choose the right paper, she adds. "I use paper that is quite soft but not textured, and acid-free, 90g up to 130g."

Above, left to right Two pieces of personal work by Minni Havas, both done with watercolour pencils.

Above, far right image by Annelie Carlström for the Swedish fashion label Minimarket, which appeared on playing cards given away with their clothing.

the structures are as I want them," she explains. "Then I'll refine these with smaller brushes during the longest part of the painting process.

"The details go in last. Getting caught up in detail too early can result in a distorted image you can't bear to erase, or boredom when you realise how much work is left to go."

Vincent, for his part, starts with a white canvas. "I cover it with a couple of layers of transparent colours and half the work is done. A lot of the skin will be made out of the underlying colour. A beautiful trick born out of laziness, but it works."

For working on the face, it seems there as many techniques as there are human expressions. "It's important to get the shape of the face right first," says Stanley Chow (*stanleychow.co.uk*). "If you get that wrong, it's very hard to put the eyes, nose and mouth in the right place in relation with each other." That partly explains why Stanley's favourite features in Illustrator, or at least those he uses the most, include the Alignment panel and the Reflect tool.

Peter views the face as the sum of its parts. "They all interconnect," he says. "A smiling face will affect the light and shade on the cheeks or the lines round the eyes.

"With this in mind, I tend to build up shade quite slowly in layers, working on lots of areas of the face simultaneously." He says this helps unify the tones and lets every element blend into the next.

Minni advises that you spend time on building up textures on across the face and hair. "For example, eyeballs are covered with fluid and mouth is soft but wrinkly. Think about the face as a 3D object and draw the strokes according to the shape."

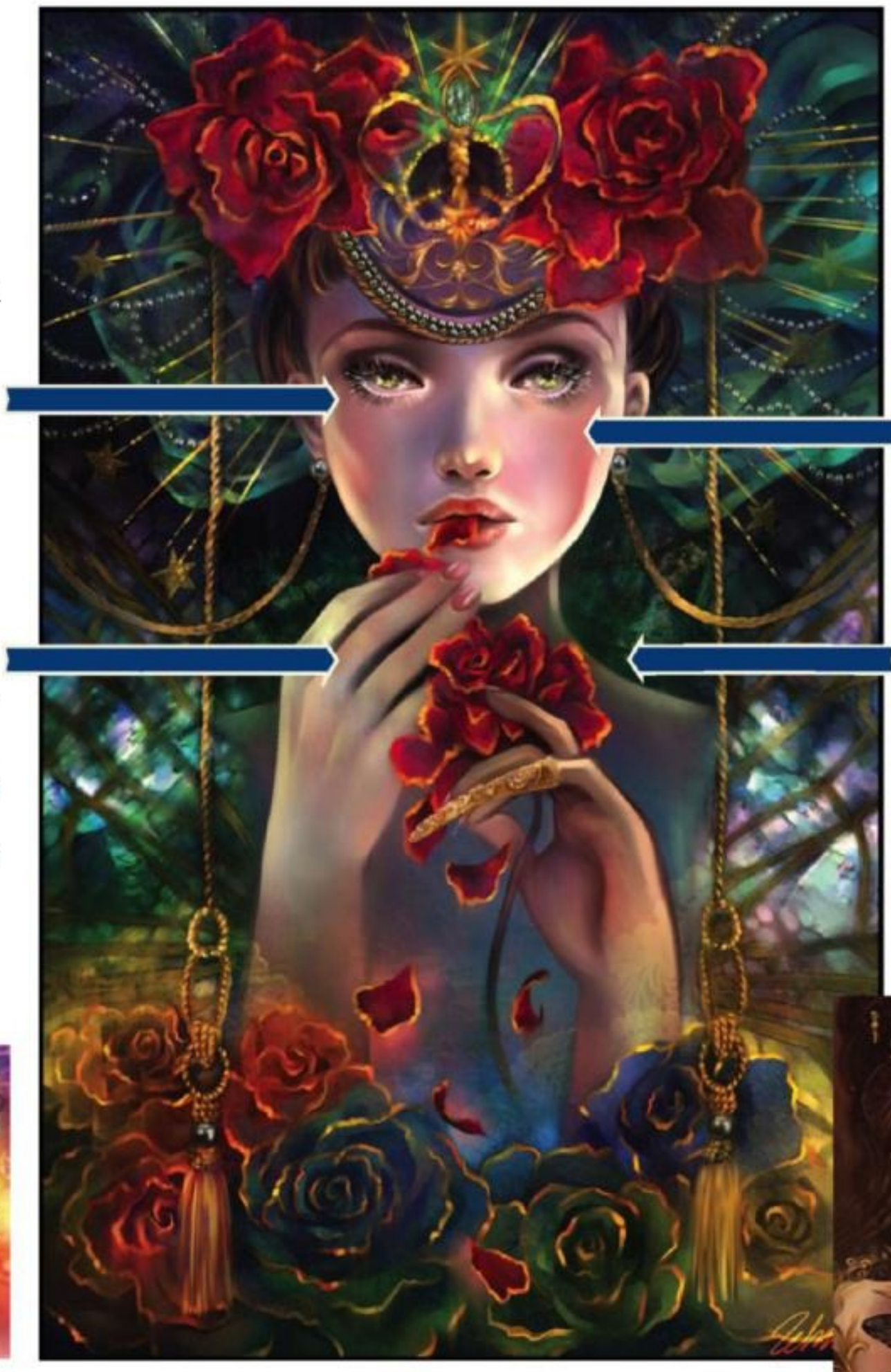
It's not necessary – or even possible – to replicate every single detail in a face, and adding too many lines may give a messy look. "I start by reducing details until I get the very essence of the face," says Oscar. "I try to be tight with the black ink, because I adjust and complete the details of the expression with lights and shadows."

"A little light in an eye does wonders," notes Anje Jager, while Peter tries to make the eyes a focal point by always leaving the whites

Schin Loong's The Rose Eater

"This is the first in my series of *Eater* paintings," says Schin Loong. "I wanted to create a very opulent, grand view and collected many inspirations to create the final image.

"Most of my work these days is digital, although I incorporate traditional watercolour textures once in a while. I use mainly Photoshop and Corel Painter."



1 "A tiny drop of highlight and colour in the eyes goes a long way in brightening up the expression."

2 "Next to the face, the hand is the most expressive part of the body. Unfortunately, all those fingers and little joints make it quite difficult to do. I practise a lot by drawing my own hand whenever I have free time and studying beautiful hands and how the fingers, nails and palm curve."

3 "Here I used a lot of textures, but kept her skin marble-smooth as a contrast."

4 "Flowers bring femininity [to a piece], and the type of flower will shape the viewer's subconscious feeling for the portrait, too. Roses bring a particular feeling of luxury and passion."

Above & far right Schin Loong's *Butterfly Kisses* and *The Moth Eater*.

perfectly white. "If you look at a photo of a face, the brow often casts some shadow over the whites of the eyes," he says. "By keeping them white, though, you can add a little extra impact."

According to Stanley, the eyebrows are the most important area in capturing an expression. "Like the human face, the eyes pretty much stay the same shape; it's eyebrows that help create an expression.

"You can say a lot with the position of the eyebrow in relation to the eye," he explains. "The higher the eyebrow, the more of a surprised look is achieved; the lower it is, the more of a scowl you get. Having one eyebrow higher than the other creates a cheeky expression."

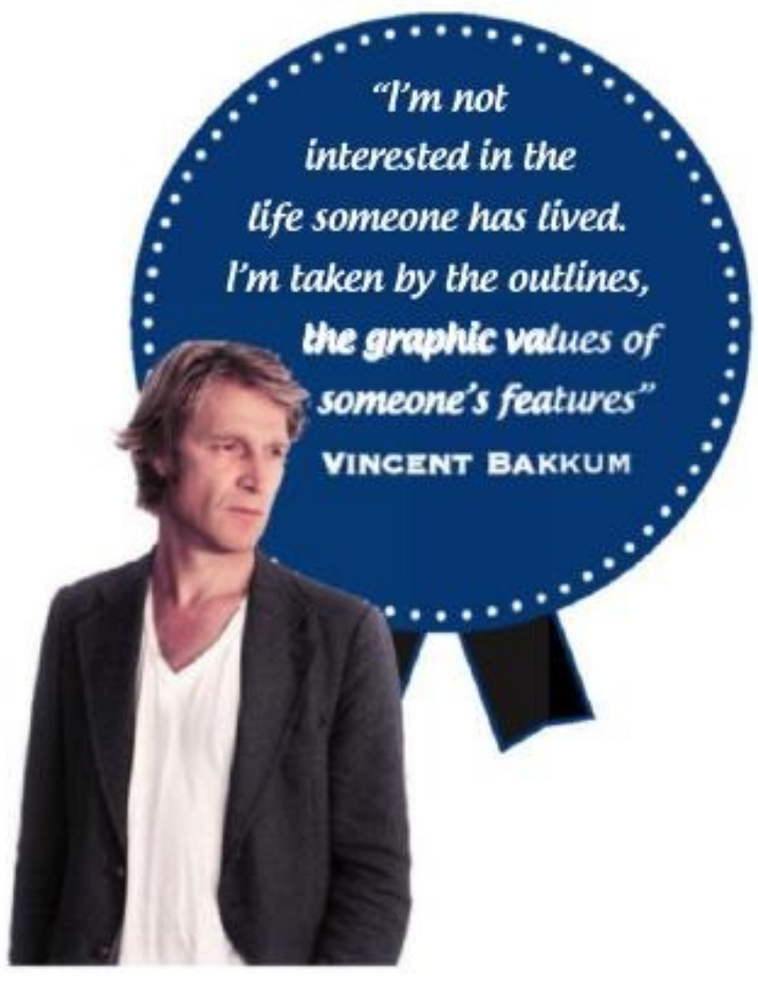
Paying attention to lighting and composition can also give a portrait impact. "Using the flow of hair, lines or objects, I try to direct the viewer's eye to the face," says Schin. "This can also be done using colour gradation or just manipulating the space around it. I try to keep it so there is no dead space in my painting and [there's] always something interesting to look at, even if it is just flat colour."

Flattering angles

A head-on face-to-face pose is best for capturing the whole face but, according to Peter, a low angle is less favourable if you're going for flattery, as it will accentuate the chin and neck. "For me the ideal facial pose is three-quarters," he says. "A half-turn of the head looks slightly less formal, less passport photo-ish and also shows off the nose slightly better."

Painter Michael C Hayes (*artofmike.com*) feels you can get good poses, movement, expressions and a sense of life by combining two things. The first is to build "a visual library and an aesthetic sense, through experience and practice, of what works well visually".

Michael says that when you draw from observation and you see something that jumps out at you as extraordinary – from the twist of a


"I'm not interested in the life someone has lived. I'm taken by the outlines, the graphic values of someone's features"
VINCENT BAKKUM

dancer's body to the subtle parting of a person's lips – you should make a note of it in your head.

His second piece of advice is obtain a good selection of reference materials for the particular expression or pose that you want for your piece.

"A good camera, lighting and model will pay dividends," he says. "You use the photo reference to fill in the gaps of your memory, and you use your memory, experience and aesthetic sense to improve upon or deviate from your reference where it falls short."

Michael likes to use a main light source. "Even when I add in secondary light, I make sure to keep one [source] dominant," he says. "From there it is a matter of physics: no area in the shadow can be brighter than the areas in light. It sounds simple, yet so many artists really struggle with it."

Peter feels that good directional lighting – where one light source is cast against one side of the face – is preferable. "A light source above will cast shadows over the eyes and may create problems in getting a hold of the likeness," he says.

Another common issue is keeping the proportions consistent, particularly if the figure is standing.

"You can easily end up with big feet and a tiny head," advises Kath Morgan. "On paper, tilt your image so that it's in line with your face, and your eye will stop trying to compensate for perspective. Digitally, make sure you look at your sketch

Top, left to right *Fascinator* and *Persephone* by Kath Morgan; Paul Nizon by Anje Jager, for the German magazine *Intersection*.

Above, left to right *Princesita* and *Yes, You!* by Vincent Bakkum.

The art of exaggeration

Caricatures exaggerate or distort the essence of their subject. They're often used to depict politicians and celebrities, so it is key to ensure that caricatures do look like their subjects.

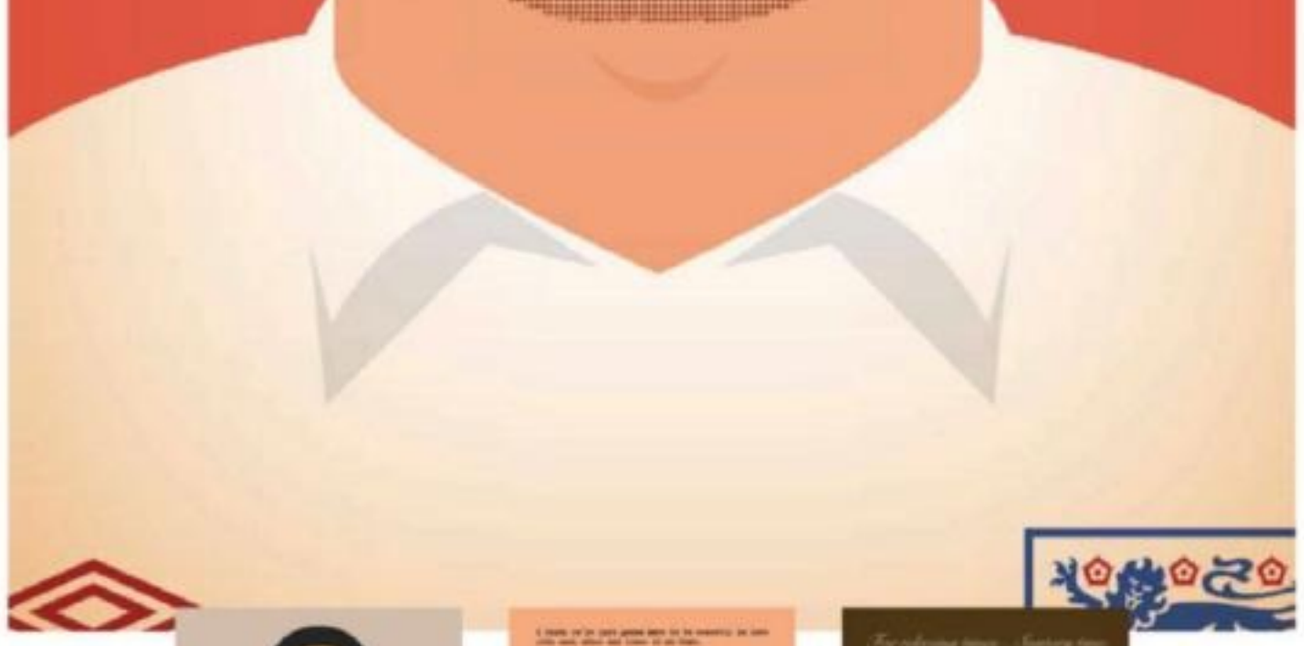
"Once the likeness has been achieved," says illustrator Stanley Chow (*stanleychow.co.uk*), "then it's down to deciding whether I want to just concentrate on the head and shoulders or [go for] a full-length pose," he says.

"The caricatures I do are essentially portraits done in my style; they only really become a caricature when I add a small body, thus exaggerating the size of the head."

Stanley feels that a caricature can become "just cheesy" if based on a clumsy exaggeration of the features. Which features you exaggerate, and by how much, determines whether you stay on the right side of cheesy, he says. For his part, he usually chooses to accentuate the girth of the neck or the shape of the face.

Illustrator Sam Kerr (*bit.ly/iiqdJZ*) produces humorous images that often stray into caricature. A prime example is his depiction for *GQ* magazine of musician Jack White playing a cloud-and-lightning guitar (*top right*). "The image was for a feature on White's new band, The Dead Weather," says Kerr. "The idea evolved from using weather as a theme, not just because of the band's name, but also White's shifting allegiance to different bands which, wait for it, changes like the weather!

"It's important to capture a likeness, but for me the emphasis is on the idea, no matter how small or stupid," he continues. "If you can get your point across in an interesting way, the rest is easy-ish."



Above top Jack White by Sam Kerr.

Above middle Wayne Rooney by Stanley Chow.

Above (left to right) Nina Simone, Gwyneth Paltrow as Margot Tenenbaum, and Bill Murray, all by Stanley Chow.

zoomed right out from time to time, and flip it often."

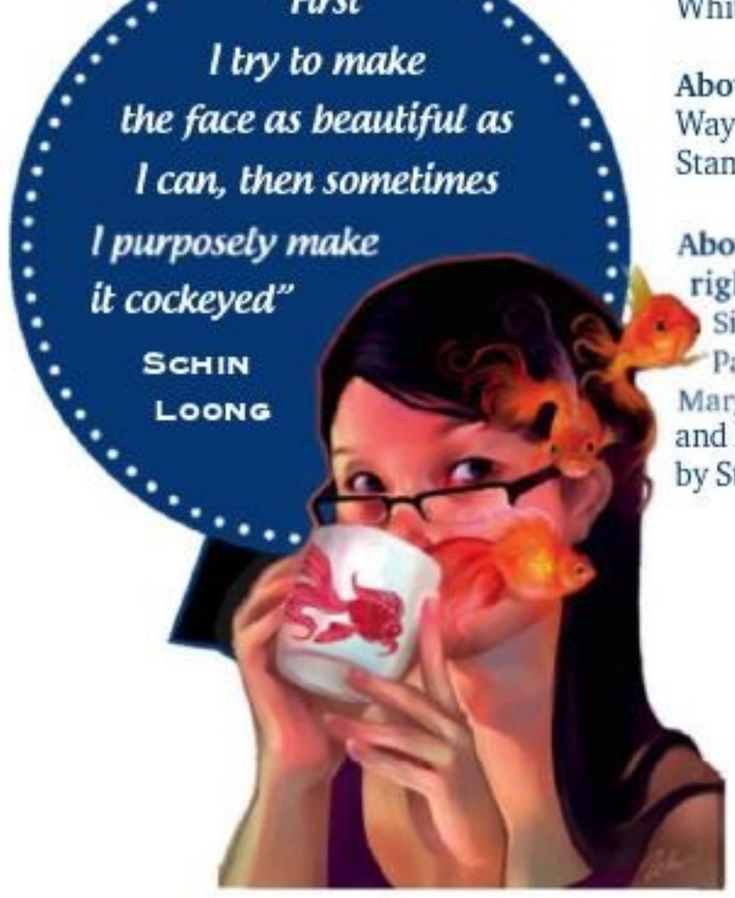
Peter will also often work by turning both his sketch and the original reference sideways or upside down. "This can work by helping the logical side of your brain to forget you're drawing 'an eye' or 'a nose'," he says. "If you can start to view the portrait as an abstraction of light and shade, it will be more truthful."

Helsinki-based Miika Saksi (*miikasaksi.com*) has some unconventional advice for creating the best portraits. "Lie," he says. "If you are doing a portrait of a person who doesn't look interesting or working from a photo that has imperfections, you don't have to be compliant with the original image. You can make eyes bigger and brighter, the chin stronger, teeth whiter and cleaner, features symmetrical, and so on.

"Make the person look interesting and awesome, because you can. It doesn't have to be so truthful. It's your vision."

Schin disagrees, preferring to try to find perfection in imperfection. "A face that is too beautiful and perfect can be ugly or just plain weird," she says. "Nobody's face is perfectly symmetrical.

"First I try to make the face as beautiful as I can, then sometimes I purposely make it cockeyed or the eyes slightly asymmetrical. As long as the face looks right, I don't really worry too much about being 100 per cent anatomically accurate." ■



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Apply colour to a fashion illustration

Abigail Daker swiftly creates a dynamic composition by digitally colouring a hand-drawn image

Fashion illustration is often done to very tight deadlines and the artist can be required to work from life, with very little time in which to detail the figure and his or her surroundings fully.

Here, Abi Daker shows how to balance a fashion composition while working at a snappy pace. You'll place the figure on a grid of thirds to help you loosen up a bit with the sketching, and learn how to design a background that can be quickly and easily coloured. She also shows you how to colour around a complex hand-drawn shape and how to edit the drawing in preparation for colouring.

The techniques here are especially pertinent to fashion illustration, but they can be used with any subject matter and will help anyone wanting to work on a hand sketch in the digital realm.

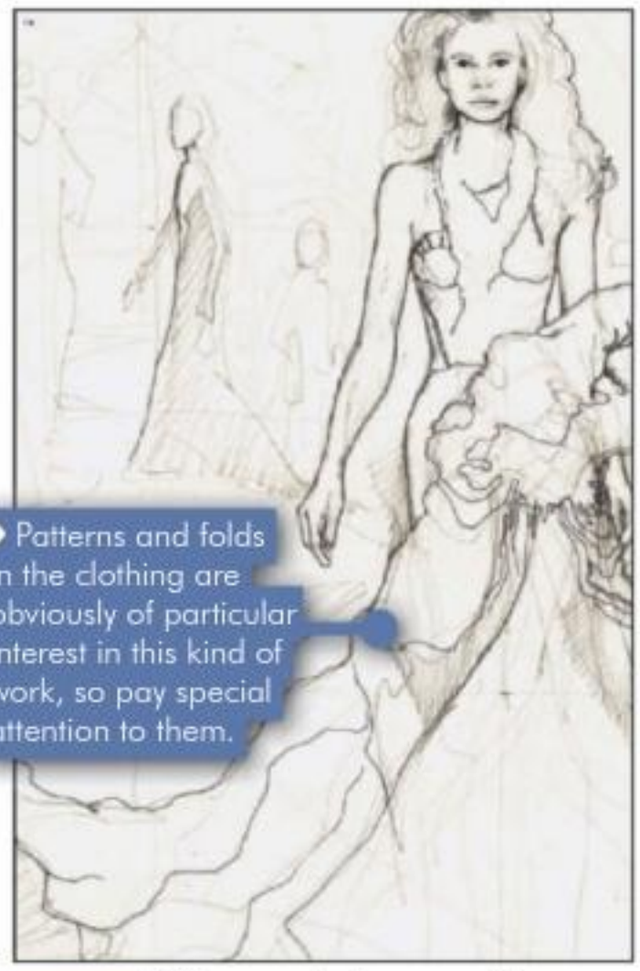
Abi worked from a photo taken at London Fashion Week 2011, but she says you can use a catwalk photo of your choice to follow the tutorial.

NOT TOO SHABBY...

> Ensure the drawing is as good as you can make it before you scan it in. The Photoshop work should be about enhancing the image and fixing small errors – not slogging to deal with major mistakes.

STEP 01 Using a pencil and ruler, lightly draw a grid to divide an A4 sheet into thirds horizontally and vertically. Sketch in the figure, but don't feel you must replicate the photo – fashion illustration benefits from a bit of licence. The grid lines should help you decide where to place the key elements.

STEP 02 Now draw the figure and the outfit in more precise detail. Try to emphasise the figure's movement through the lines and sweep of the clothing.

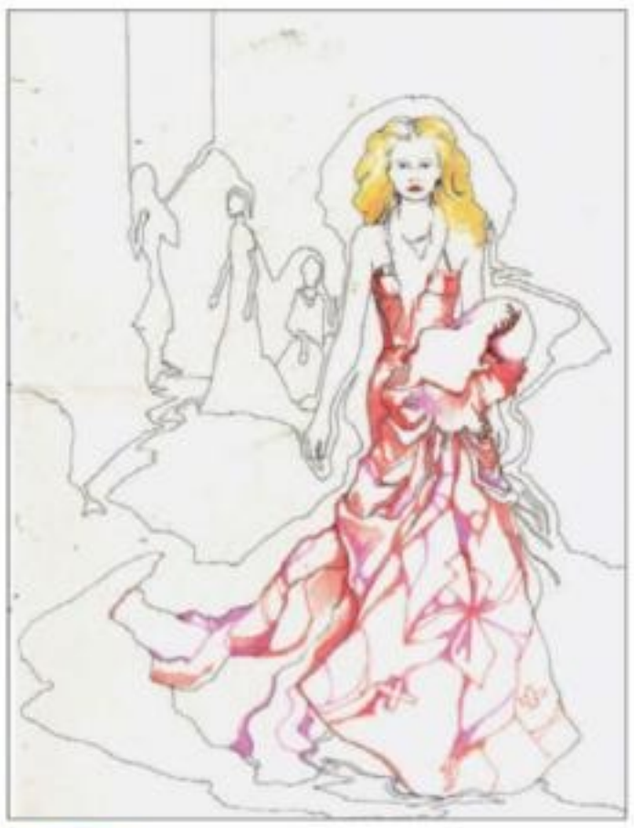


> Patterns and folds in the clothing are obviously of particular interest in this kind of work, so pay special attention to them.

STEP 03 When you're happy with your drawing, use a black fineliner pen to do outlines around the body and the dress. Draw in any areas of detail that need to be emphasised.

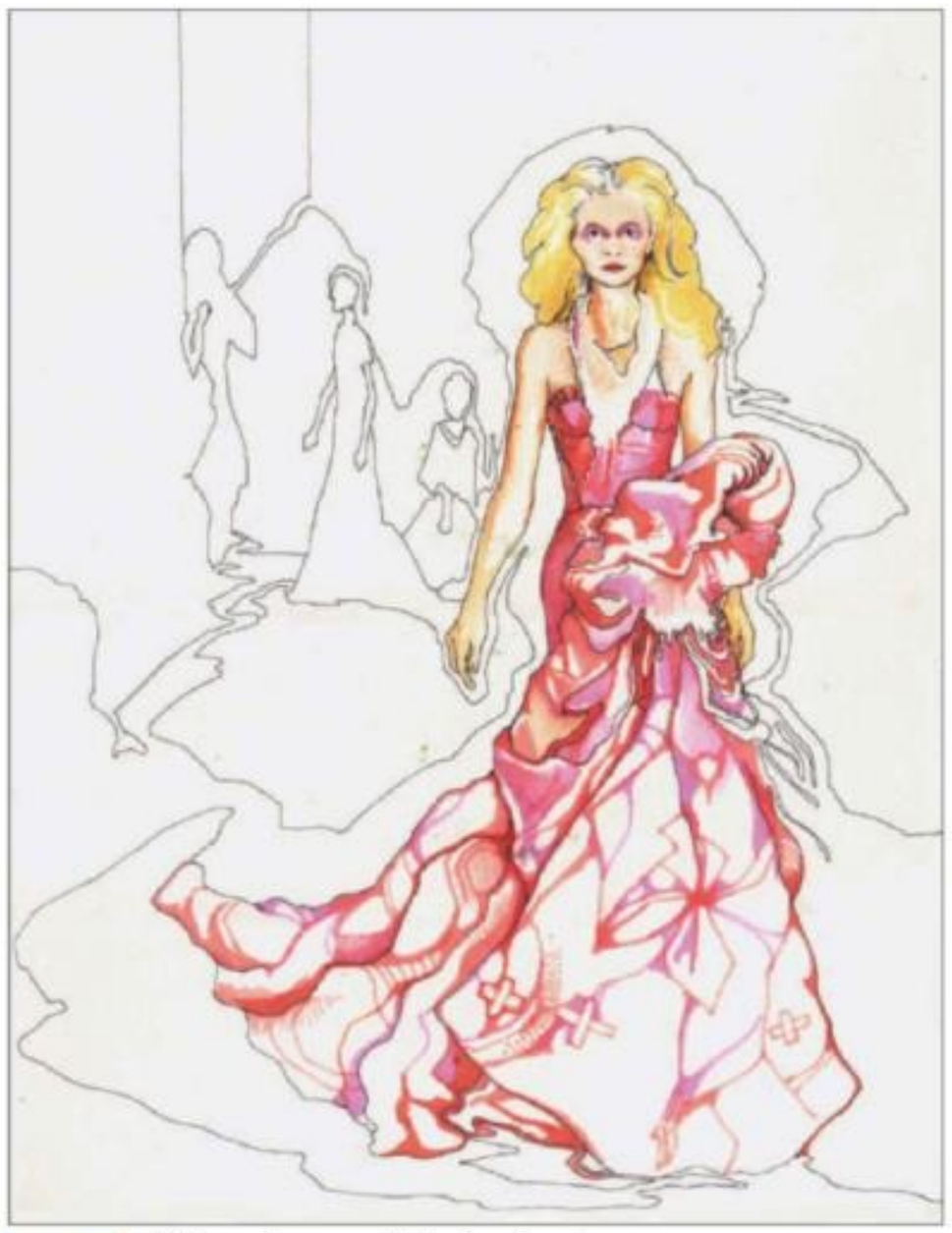
STEP 04 Also use the fineliner to draw in some of the shapes you sketched in the background earlier. Keep these lines clean and quite simple. You want the background to set off the figure, not detract from it.

STEP 05 Erase your pencil lines from the figure and the background. Redraw any incomplete lines and add more detail to the background as needed. It will be much easier to see what needs doing now that the fuzzy pencil lines are gone. Remember, though, that we want to keep the background simple compared to the figure.



STEP 06 Start to colour in just the figure using your preferred medium. I used graphic pens for the clothes, though watercolour pencils would also have worked well.

Use the same colours as in the original photo and draw in more details of the clothes and fabric patterns.



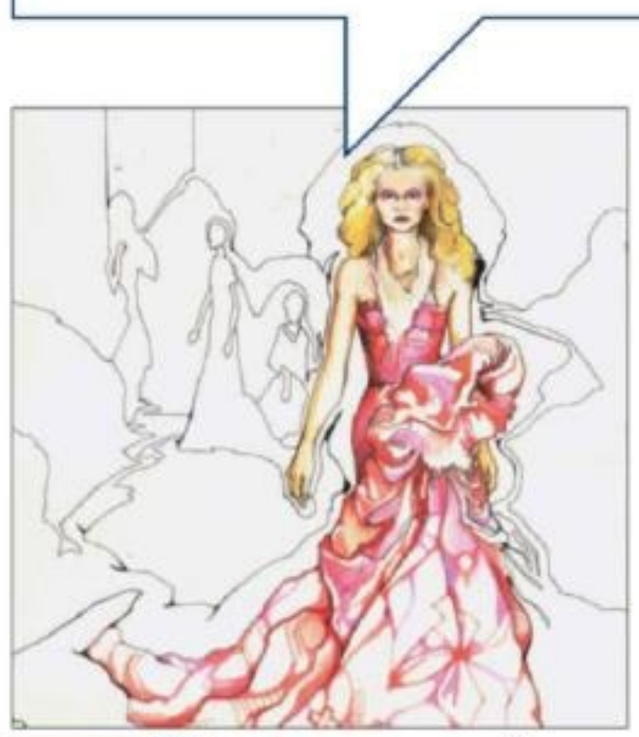
STEP 07 Watercolour paint is the best medium for skin. Note that colours can often scan in too dark if your scanner's not calibrated, so you may want to keep your palette light and to remove any excess paint with tissue.

The figure needs to appear soft and organic in contrast to the background, so don't overpaint the features. Also add some deeper hues to the folds in the fabric of the dress.

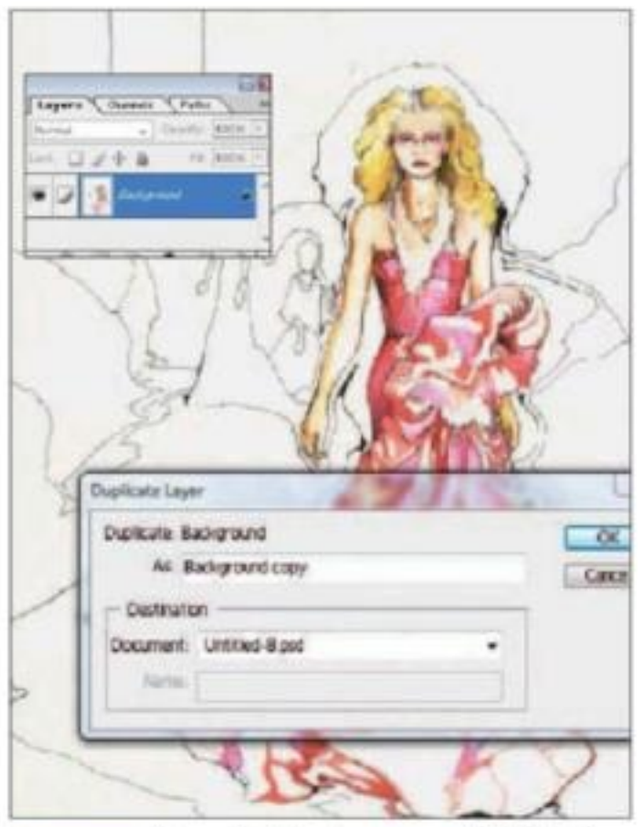
WHEN NOT TO USE THE ERASER

› If you want to fill empty areas with the Paint Bucket tool (as in Step 13), don't use the Eraser tool to make initial corrections to your scan. Doing so will change the colour of the empty areas and this could lead to artefacts when the Paint Bucket Tool is applied. Do corrections with the Brush tool instead, as mentioned in Step 10.

"Though extra pencil shading on the face can make the features look too dark, using it on the dress can be a good way of lending the figure greater depth"



STEP 08 Reintroduce some pencil shading on the figure only to bring it out further. Using pencil on the face can make the features look too dark, but pencil shading on the dress may lend the figure greater depth. Also go over the pen lines, making sure they are unbroken and heavy enough to be 'read' by the scanner.

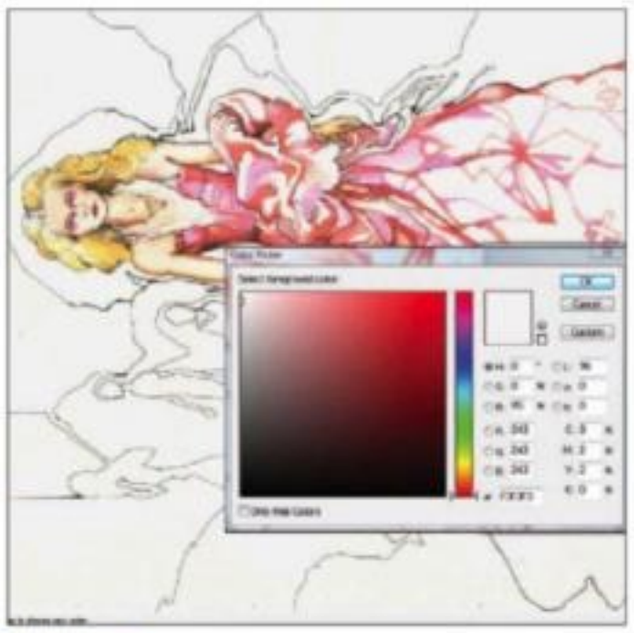


STEP 09 Scan in the image at 300dpi at least (I worked at 400dpi, but this could be slow if you're using an older computer).

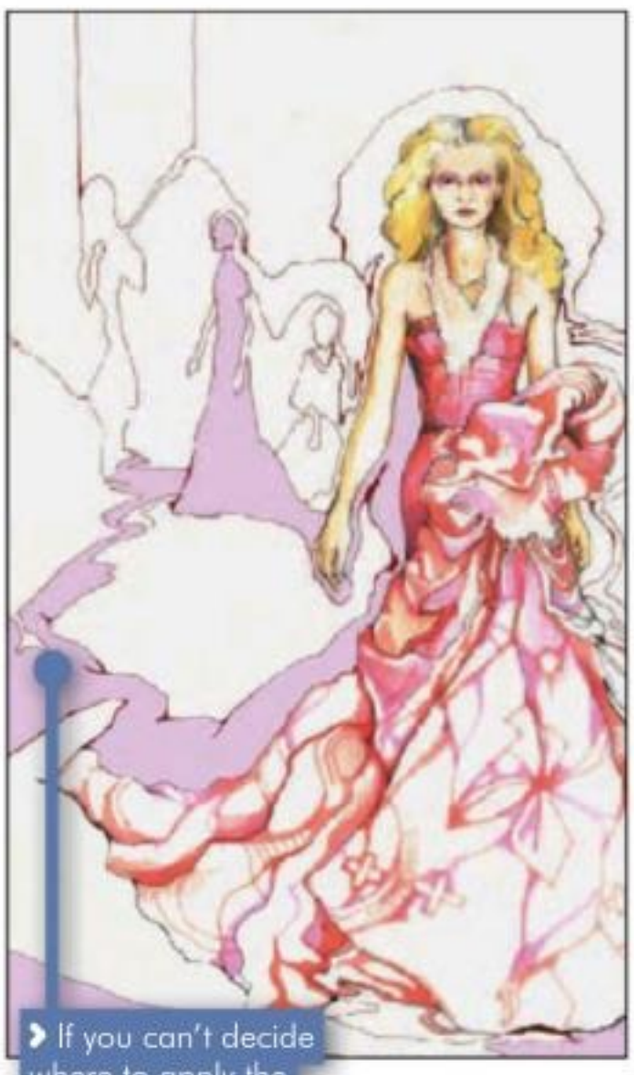
Right-click on the 'Background' layer and duplicate it. This way, if you make any major mistakes, you still have your original scan to return to.

STEP 10 Now prepare the image for colouring. Zoom in to 100%, select the Brush tool (**B**) and choose Permanent Marker from the Dry Media Brushes list. Use the Color Picker to sample the background colour of the paper and then use the Brush to correct any smudges.

STEP 11 Select the Lasso Tool (**L**) and click around the figure carefully to select it (you may need to rotate the canvas 90° to have the whole figure visible on screen at the maximum zoom). Then go to **Select > Inverse** so that the background is now selected. This lets us work on it with no fear of affecting the main model.



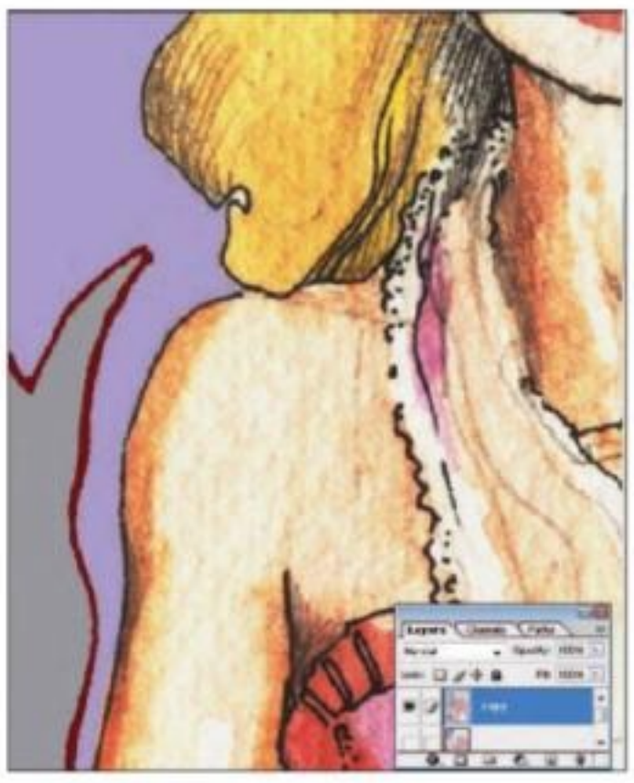
STEP 12 Pick a colour that stands out against the shades used in the figure (I've chosen a vivid red). Select the Paint Bucket tool (**G**) with 100% opacity and a Tolerance of 80, and fill in the fineliner strokes so they are no longer black. This gives us clear boundaries for our artwork. Zoom in and ensure that you have gone over all the relevant lines in the background. Correct any gaps using the Brush tool with the size set at 5 pixels or so.



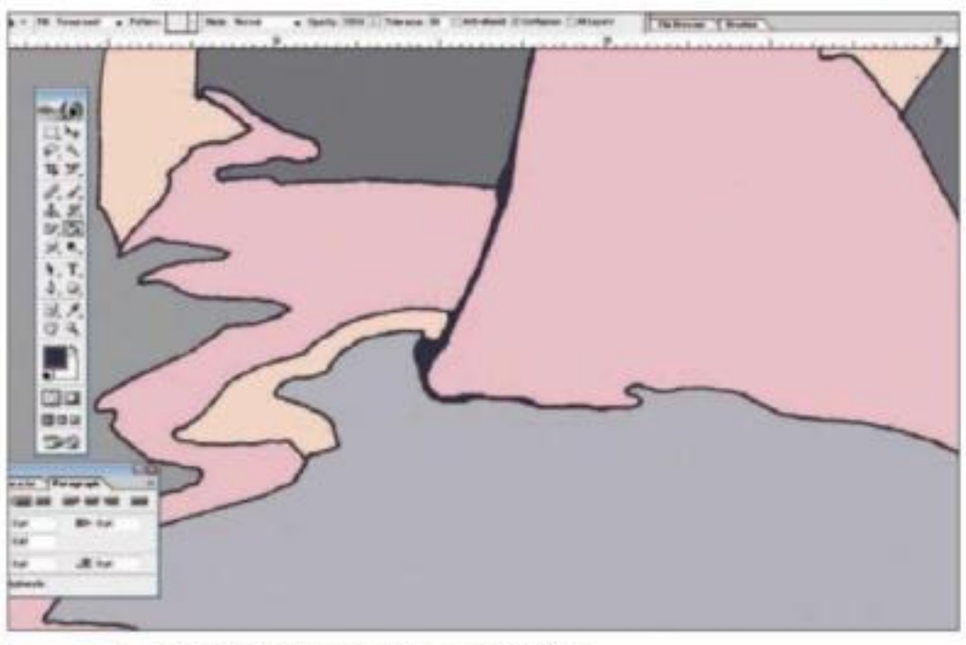
› If you can't decide where to apply the background colour, work outwards from one corner and fill in every third or fourth section.

STEP 13 With the figure upright again, select the Paint Bucket tool with a Tolerance of 80 and set the opacity to 50%. Choose a blue or mauve (the eye tends to associate these colours with the background) and fill in a few sections with it.

STEP 14 Continue filling sections around the figure, varying the brightness or colour slightly for each one. This will help the colours you're applying stay in the background and allow the figure to stand out better.



STEP 15 Once all the background is coloured, zoom in to 100% and correct any uneven or unfinished areas around the figure with the Brush tool. Erase any bits of the drawing you feel need reworking, redrawing the lines to match what you already have.



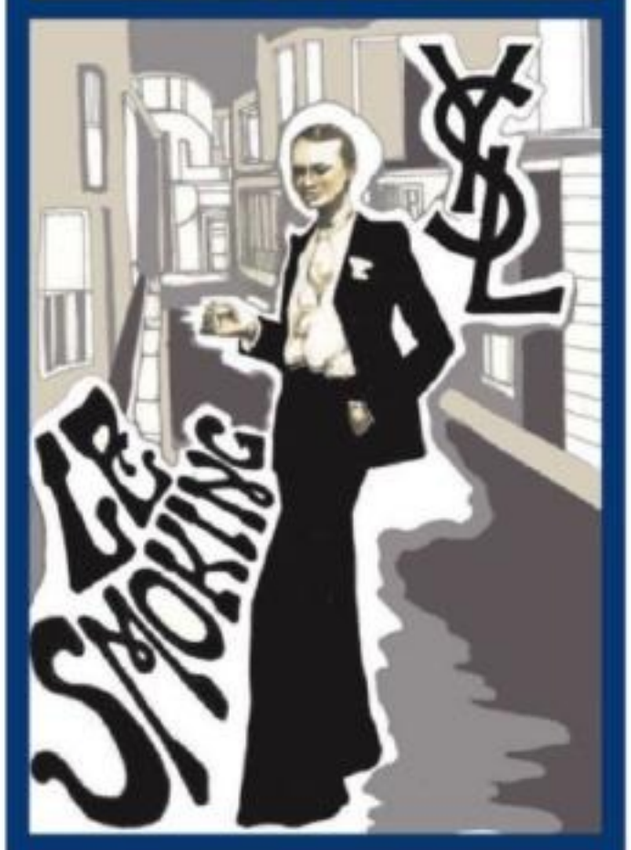
STEP 16 Finally, we need to revert the red lines of step 12 back to the colour of the fineliner. Do this with the Paint Bucket tool (opacity at 100%) and use the Color Picker to sample the colour of the original lines. Apply this to the red lines and you're done. ■

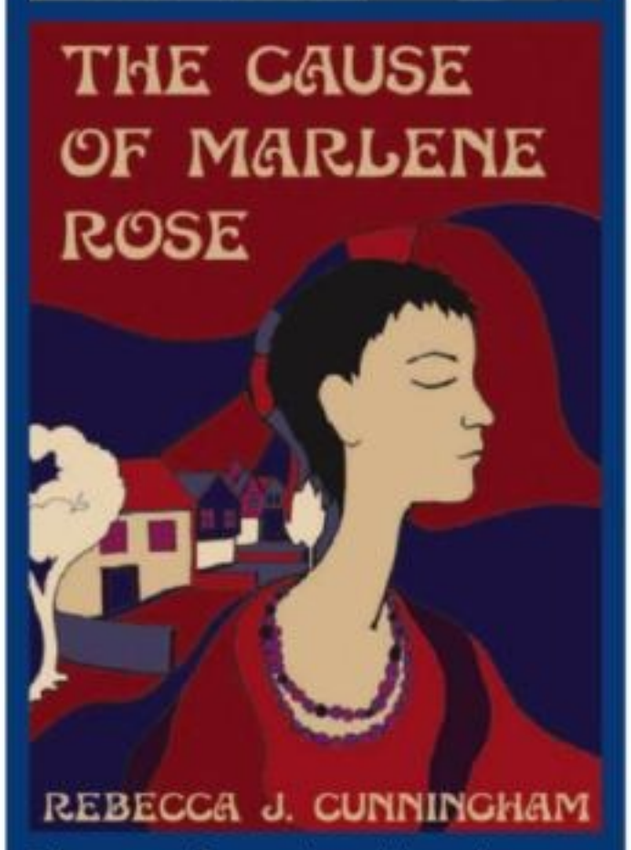
PROFILE ABIGAIL DAKER

› Abi Daker is a British artist and illustrator living in Cyprus. Her work, created using both hand-drawn and digital techniques, is influenced by fashion, cinema, literature, landscapes and old maps. Abi regularly does book illustrations, and works for a range of editorial and advertising clients.

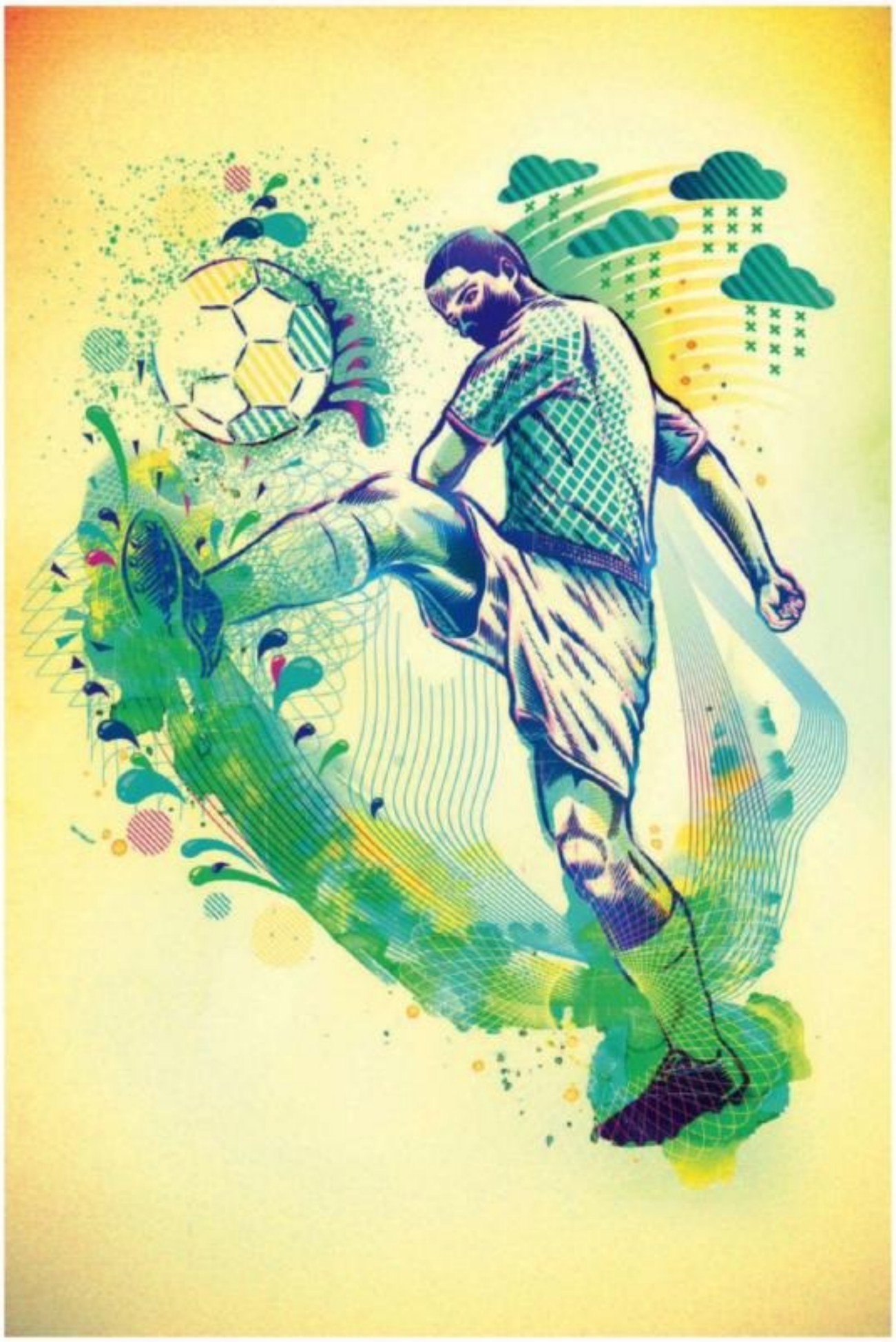
CONTACT

- *abigaildaker.com*





Above top Personal work based on a fashion photo at *andreacrews.com*. **Above centre** *Le Smoking* features the iconic Yves Saint Laurent women's tuxedo. **Above** Jacket for a novel.



> LEARN STROKE AND PATTERNS

Add motion to an illustration using lines

Eric Van Den Boom reveals how simple lines and patterns can give an old-school sporty artwork the illusion of movement

On this tutorial, illustrator Eric Van Den Boom explains how you can use lines and patterns to add a sense of motion to your illustration or photograph.

Here you'll learn how to make your own pattern swatches and transform them. You'll then use them to make your football player appear to be at the centre of the action, resulting in a more dynamic piece.

> INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator

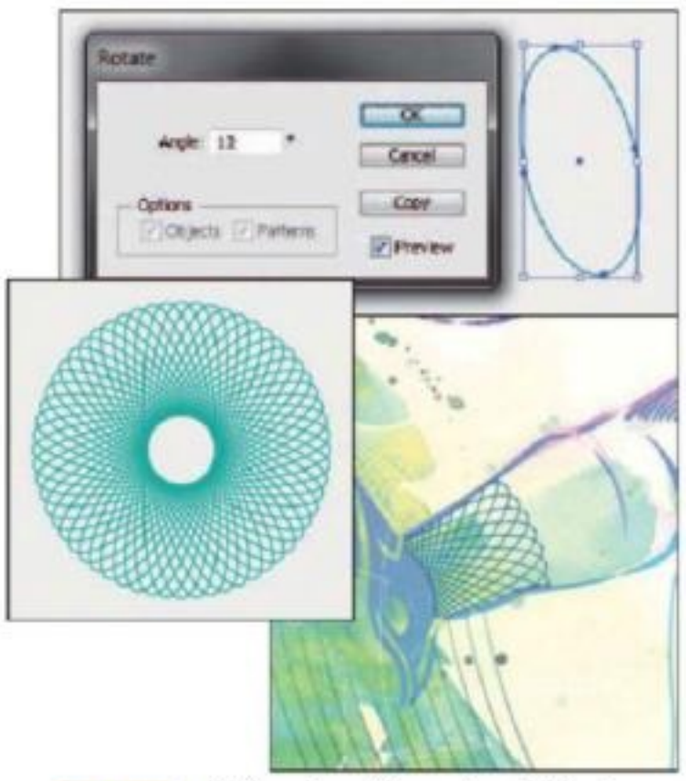
PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial can be downloaded from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

STEP 01 Place the file provided, *FootballPlayer_Lineart.psd*. Double-click the layer in the Layers palette (**Window > Layers**) and check the Template box. Name the layer 'illustration'.

STEP 02 Create a new layer named 'decoration'. Draw a curve with the Pen tool (**P**). Duplicate it by dragging with **Alt + Shift** held down, then hit **Cmd/Ctrl + D** a few times to duplicate the result. Select one set of end points and bunch them together by averaging positions (hit **Cmd/Ctrl + Alt + J** and check 'Both'). Select all curves and go to **Object > Path > Outline Stroke**. Use the Eraser tool (**Shift + E**) on them as needed, and change their fill to a gradient. Select all again and go to **Window > Transparency**, then choose Hard Light from the drop-down menu.

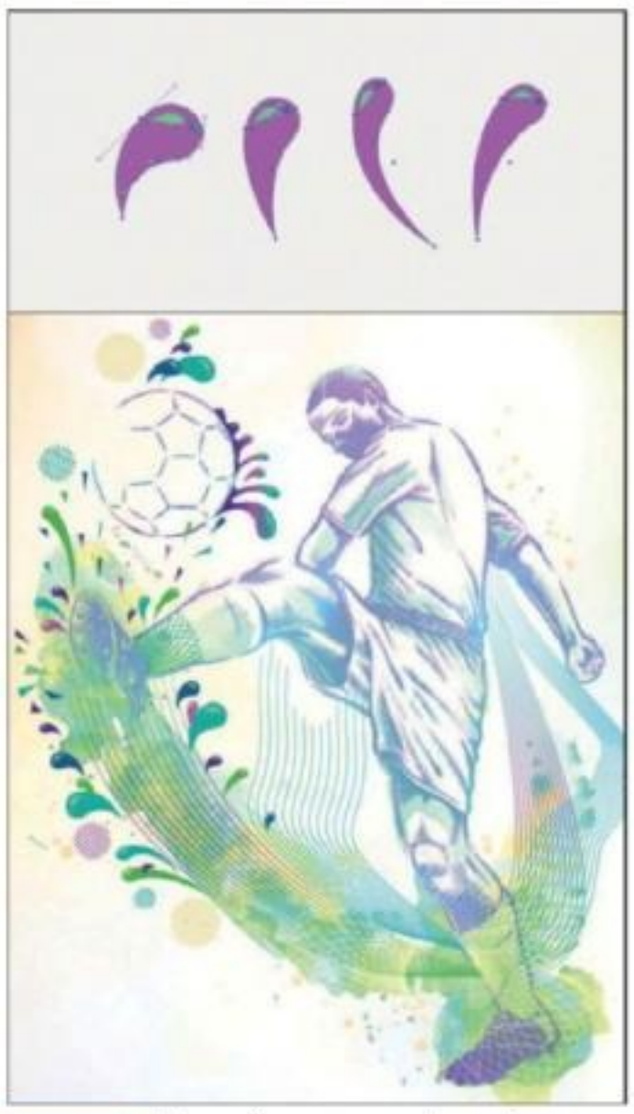
You can add another set of lines with a different gradient; try moving multiple anchor points and experimenting.

STEP 03 Draw a straight line with the Rectangle tool, and another one aligned to it but a little thicker. Give the thicker rectangle no fill. Select both and drag-and-drop them into your Swatches panel (**Window > Swatches**). Select the new swatch and draw an ellipse with the Ellipse tool. Go to **Object > Transform > Rotate**, type 45° in the Angle field and hit OK. Make a couple of line swatches with other colours and place them in the image on your 'decoration' layer.

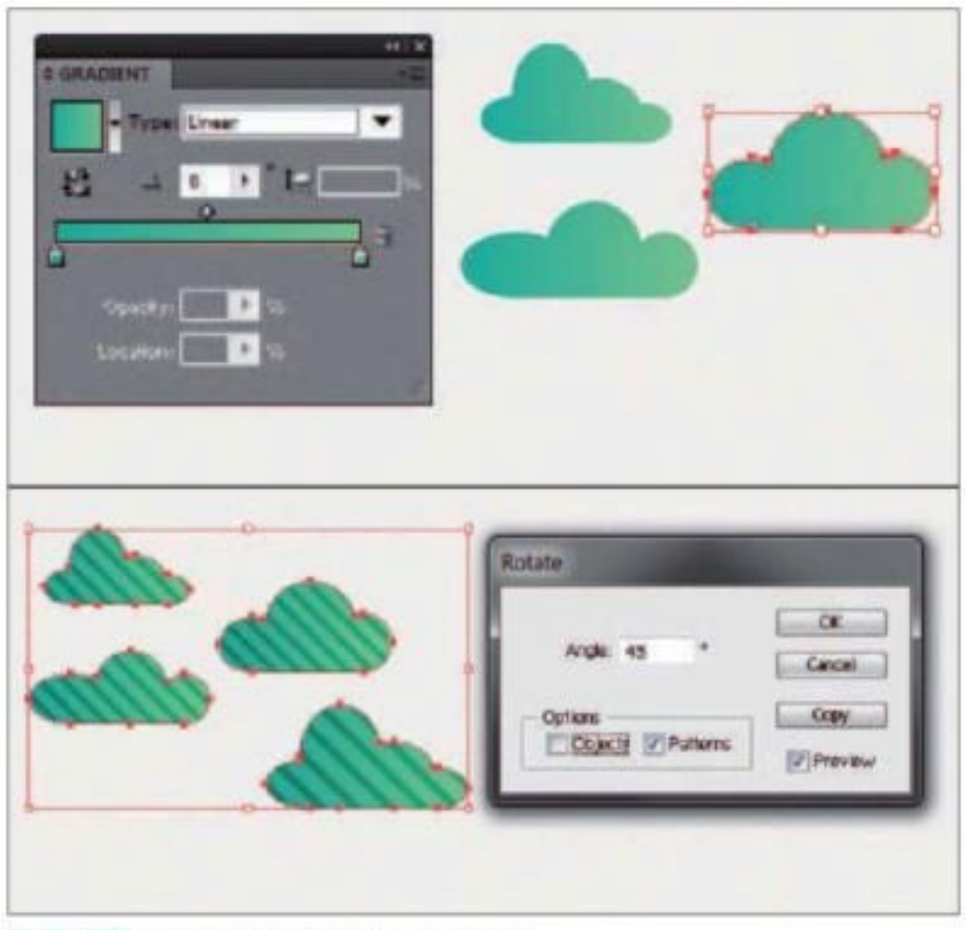


04 Using the Ellipse tool (**L**), draw an ellipse with no fill. Go to **Object > Transform > Rotate**, enter 12° in the Angle field and hit the Copy button. Press **Cmd/Ctrl + D** several times until you've gone round all the way. Select the whole shape and group it (**Cmd/Ctrl + G**). Make a copy, go to **Object > Path > Outline Stroke**, and move the result to the leg, erasing most of the shape so it fits nicely. Repeat the shape elsewhere in the image where you think it will work. You can also experiment with the Transparency style (**Window > Transparency**), for example, by choosing Hard Light from the drop-down menu.

05 Draw a narrow triangle with the Pen tool, make 12 copies and stack all the triangles as shown. Apply the Unite shape mode in the Pathfinder panel, then go to **Effect > Warp > Arc**. Set Bend to 25% and Distortion to 0%. With the Transparency mode set to Multiply, fill it with a gradient and move the object to the player's head and back. Use the Eraser tool to remove parts that overlap him.



06 Draw four water-drop shapes using the Pen tool and add a 'highlight' shape to them (*top*). Make copies of these drops and rotate, reflect and stretch them a bit. Bring them into the image, changing some of the colour fills to add interest. You can also add some triangles and other shapes.

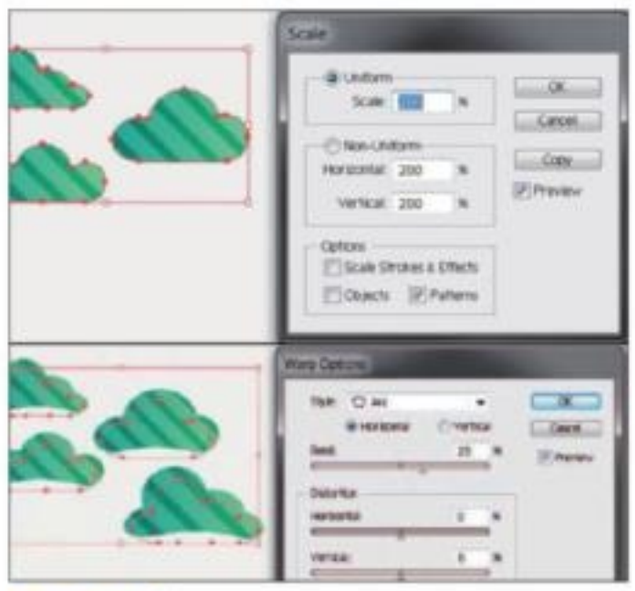


07 Using the Pen tool, draw several clouds, filling each of them with a gradient. Select them all, then copy them and paste in front (**Cmd/Ctrl + F**).

Fill the new clouds with the line swatch that we made and put in the Swatch panel earlier, then select Multiply from the drop-down menu in the Transparency palette. Keeping the clouds selected, go to **Object > Transform > Rotate**. Uncheck Objects and type 45° in the Angle field. Press OK.

ROTATE PATTERNS

› If an object has a pattern fill, you can choose to rotate the fill alone: use **Object > Transform > Rotate** with the Patterns tickbox checked, while leaving the Objects tickbox unchecked.



08 Use **Object > Transform > Scale** to vary the size of the clouds' pattern fill (deselect Scale Strokes & Effects and Objects so you don't scale the clouds or their strokes). Now select all the clouds and go to **Effect > Warp > Arc**, setting the Bend to 25% but leaving the Distortion at 0%. Arrange the results in your illustration, and add some raindrops beneath by drawing crosses with the Pen tool.

09 Try making some new swatches based on what you've learned and add these to the image. Double click the 'illustration' layer, deselect Template, hit OK and you're done. If you like, you can export the result to Photoshop for some final colour correction, as I have done with the finished artwork opposite. ■

PROFILE ERIC VAN DEN BOOM

› Eric Van Den Boom is a freelance illustrator and graphic designer who works under the name BoomArtwork. Based in Utrecht in the Netherlands, he produces a wide range of illustrative design work for advertising agencies, cultural organisations, the world of fashion and the music industry, and his clients are located all around the world. Eric's art has been described as 'authentic and elegant, with an edge'.

CONTACT

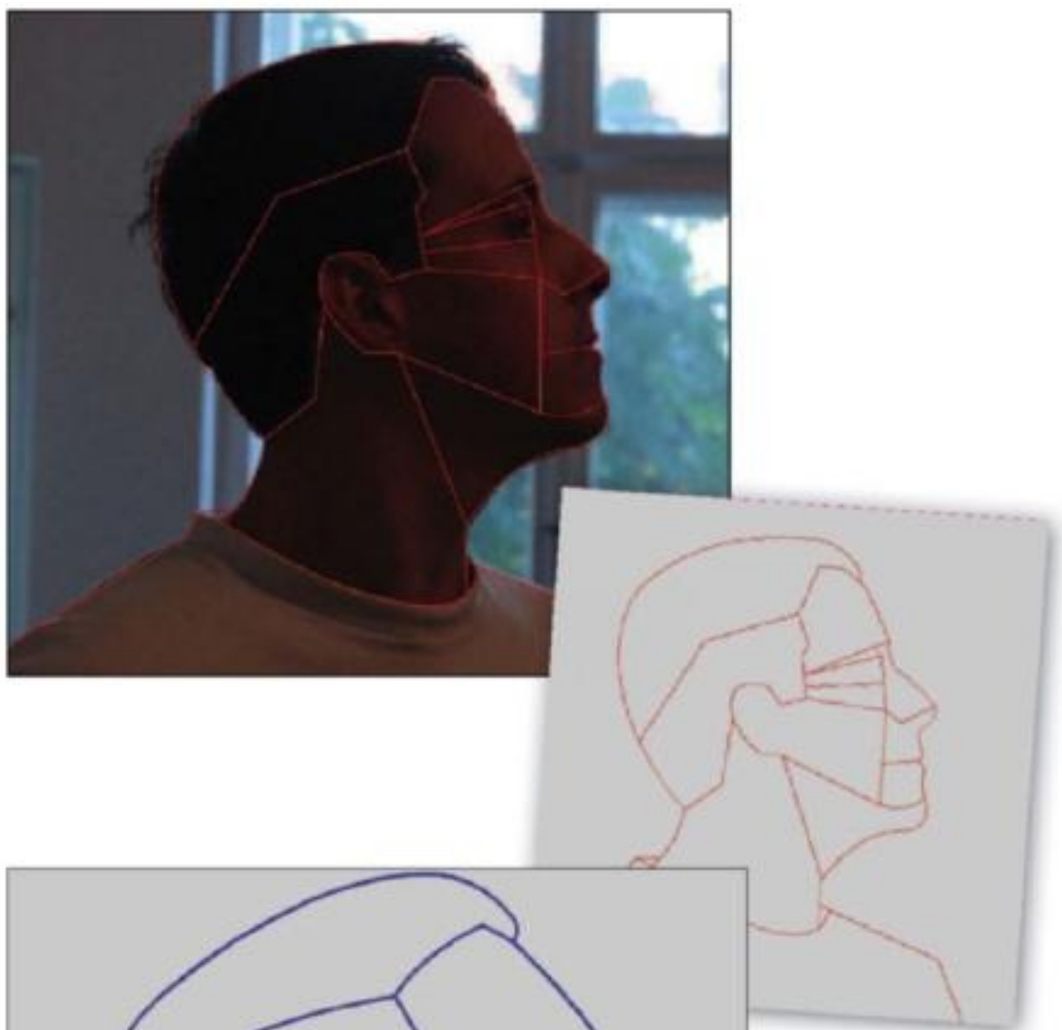
- *illustrationweb.com/boomartwork*
- *boomartwork.com*

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2-3 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS4 or higher, Photoshop CS4 or higher

STEP 01 For this project, I wanted to create something with the feel of vintage Socialist posters. After finding good reference material, I decided to create a piece with figures looking to the skies in a stirring fashion. First I took pictures of Leo and myself in the correct pose. As the images are just for reference, they don't need to be perfectly exposed.



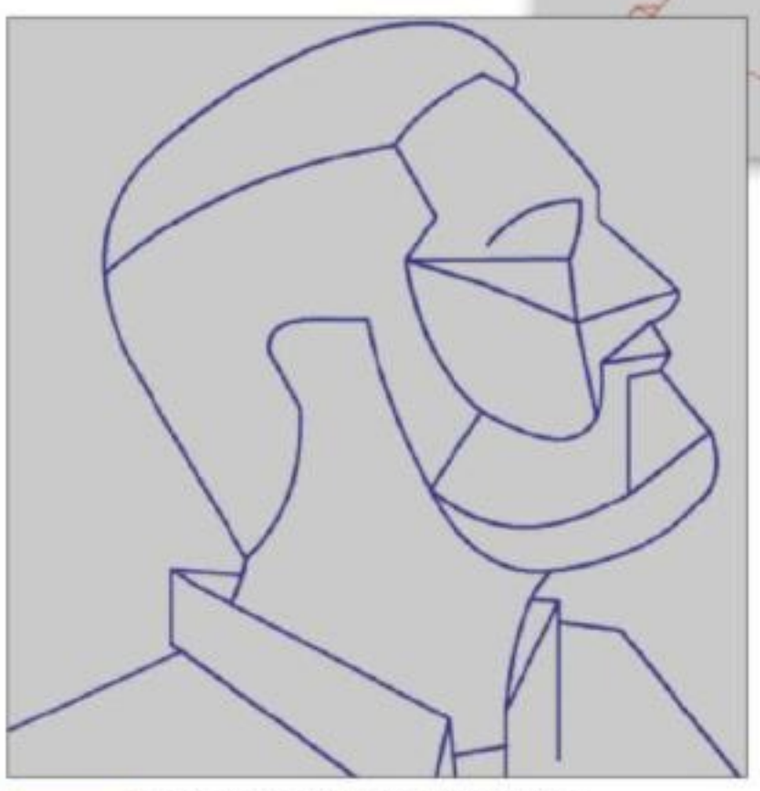
LEARN GEOMETRIC PORTRAITS

Put a low-poly spin on **art portraits**

Elroy uses 3D modelling computer graphics techniques and Photoshop texturing to recreate his striking vintage visuals

Here Damien Vignaux – aka Elroy – shows you how he created an artwork for his band, The Escapists, a techno act comprised of Damien and Leonizer records boss Léonard De Léonard. The artwork appears on the cover of The Escapists' EP, *Les Ailes du Courage (Wings of Courage)*, as well as on flyers for their live shows.

You'll see how to create this cool, grainy work with a low-poly (a polygon mesh of a small number of polygons) twist. First we'll create some vector portraits, then get texturing in Photoshop with self-made brushes.



STEP 02 I drew the simple geometries of the faces in the photos with the Line Segment tool (\) in Illustrator. If the contours are difficult to follow, enhancing the contrast in Photoshop – or even converting the images to black-and-white – makes the job easier.

STEP 03 I used the same process to draw the aeroplane from a reference photo. I then positioned the heads and two planes appropriately, with the planes rotated to point in the same direction as the figures' gaze. I added lines to the planes to add to the sense of motion towards the top right. Then I hid these to work on the rest of the composition.

I selected a colour scheme, picking the orange flesh colours from an old US military poster and using warm shades of yellow and brown to match.

STEP 04 The next step is to fill this line art with gradients, so you can really feel the geometry. Orient all the gradients, so that the dark parts correspond to shadows. Note that the cheekbones are lighter than the area surrounding where the eyes would be.

STEP 05 To add grain, import the image into Photoshop, and go to **Filter > Noise > Add Noise...** Select parameters as you like, though your choices will depend on the size of the file you're working on. If you work at 300dpi you will need more grain than if you work on a smaller piece.

STEP 06 I thought having the clouds drawn in the same style would be a bit much, especially as I'm going for a 'dreamy adventurer' feel. I wanted something light and ethereal that surrounds the figures and brings a sense of atmosphere.

I ended up converting some stock images of clouds to greyscale and increasing the contrast. I then applied them using a Screen blending mode, so only their highlights appear.

STEP 07 I also used the clouds to make brushes. I always enjoy this step of the process, giving a little extra life to the vector base using texturing. I have made a lot of custom 'paint splash' brushes, and I encourage you to do so, too.

I used the clouds and paint splashes subtly across the whole composition. To create the circular elements, I drew some circles and turned them into clipping masks, then painted inside them using the cloud brushes.

RESEARCH YOUR REFERENCES WELL

I really think a good project is founded on finding good references. Doing so, gives you a clear picture of which direction you're heading in. That's reassuring even though you'll inevitably experiment and make changes as the work proceeds.

STEP 08 As a photographer, I always look at a piece as if it were a photo. To heighten the vintage feel, I decided to add little details found in old pictures, like vignetting. A vignette is a darkening at the edges, to help direct focus on the centre. This was painted on, with dust and scratches added (shown above left). The layer's blending mode was set to Multiply. ■

PROFILE DAMIEN VIGNAUX

Damien Vignaux, 28, is an art director based in Berlin. Most of his work involves print and motion design for clients such as EMI, MTV, Nike and Universal. He is also a photographer and director, always switching from one project to another, exploring various styles with an edgy and playful aesthetic.

CONTACT

- *elroy.fr*

Above top left *Reign In Blood.*
Above top right *Carebear my ass.*
Above left *Leonard Drunkbass*
Above right *Straaatch Cracking.*

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 6 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop CS or higher

> LEARN TRACING TECHNIQUES

Stylise photos using **colourful shapes**

Mart Biemans says bright shards can create unique-looking art

Mart Biemans' artwork *Feel It* combines a neon-infused colour scheme with dynamic triangles and other shapes to achieve its eye-catching quality.

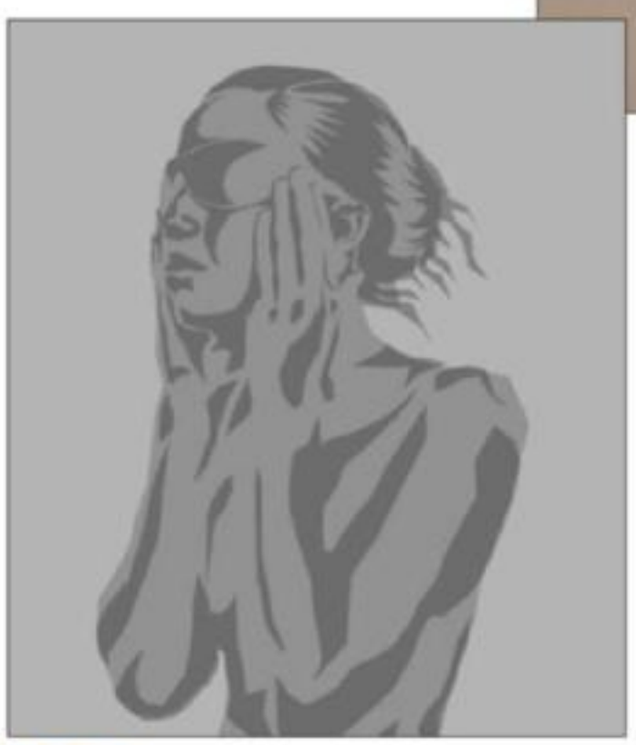
Here, Mart explains the techniques he used to create this image for the online art collective slashTHREE (*slashthree.com*). You'll learn how to build up the image by tracing the photo and creating the shapes, then you will develop the colour schemes and apply the lighting effects.

These techniques can be adapted to a wide range of styles – so after completing this tutorial, repeat it and see how far you can push it beyond what you see here.

STEP 01 The first step in creating this style of artwork is to choose a good stock photo.

My starting point (right) was bought from *dreamstime.com*, and if you'd like to use the very same image, you'll find it at *bit.ly/bFBU9Q*. Alternatively, you can use any waist-up shot that's largely in profile.

Place the image in a new A3 portrait Photoshop document, making sure you have some free space around the margins for the effects we will create.



STEP 02 Beneath the photo, create a new layer in a mid-tone colour to form the background of the artwork. Create another layer above the photo and trace the model's outline very roughly with the Pen tool (**P**), filling it with a colour darker than the background layer. Hide this layer.

Create a third layer at the top of the layer stack and trace the shadows, filling these with an even darker colour. You don't have to include much detail.

STEP 03 Unhide the outline layer and repeat the previous step with multiple colour variations, applied using a variety of blend modes to lighten up the work. Again, there is no need to incorporate much detail. Make sure that you lighten up the areas that are highlights in the original photo and that you darken the shadows.

EFFICIENT WAYS WITH LAYERS

> Every time you add a new layer, make the photo the layer just below, and hide it. Regularly unhide it so you can compare lighting and tone with the original image.

STEP 04 On a new layer, create a rectangle with a colourful gradient. Duplicate it a few times at different sizes and filled with gradients of different colours (above left).

Create a series of variations using **Edit > Transform > Warp**. Go crazy and make some weird abstract shapes. Now place the shapes over the highlights on your image and change the blending mode to Screen.

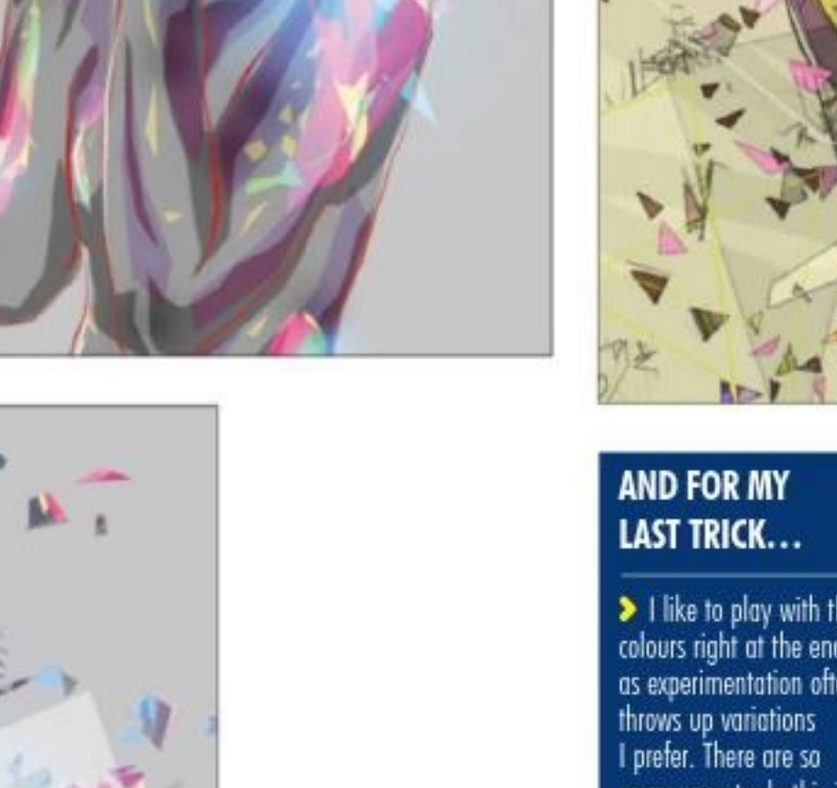
STEP 05 To bring out areas such as the arms that may be difficult to make out, we're going to add some lines with the Pencil tool (**B**). Set the Size to around 19px, and ensure that 'Simulate pressure' is on if you're using a tablet. Draw black lines on dark areas and white lines on light areas.

STEP 06 I wasn't happy with the colour scheme at this point, so I added add a red-green Gradient Map adjustment layer. If you do this, use a Lighten blending mode at 100% opacity.

STEP 07 The artwork is still a little plain. To give it more depth, create a new layer and set its blending mode to Screen. Use a large round soft brush in a light blue colour and paint on the areas you'd like to brighten.

Create another layer and set its blending mode to Soft Light at 58% opacity. With your brush's colour set to black, paint on the areas where you want to darken the shadows.

STEP 08 Now we're going to add a 'shattered' effect to our image with the Polygonal Lasso tool (**L**). Select small areas of the image, press **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + C** to copy a merged version of all the layers below your selection, and then paste it to a new layer. Move this layer around and repeat this step as often as you like.



"You may be able to harden the overall look with the Find Edges filter, but this can give patchy results"

STEP 09 Finish off by adjusting the colours (see 'And for my last trick…', *left*) and adding a few Pencil tool strokes to harden up the overall look. You could achieve a similar effect quickly with **Filter > Stylize > Find Edges**, but this can give patchy results. As luck would have it, it works rather well with this image as the pattern of shadows and colours chosen is easy for the filter to trace. ■

AND FOR MY LAST TRICK…

I like to play with the colours right at the end as experimentation often throws up variations I prefer. There are so many ways to do this in Photoshop; my favourite adjustments are Hue/Saturation, Gradient Map and Photo Filter.

PROFILE MART BIEMANS

Mart Biemans is a digital artist, illustrator and graphic designer from the Netherlands. Almost everything this young creative (he's 18) has learned he taught himself. What started out as a fun pursuit at the age of 14 has become a very important part of his daily life.

CONTACT
martbiemans.com

OUOA (self-initiated).

Do Nothing Live DVD, released last year.

CHAPTER 4

CHARACTER ART

THE SECRETS OF CHARACTER ART REVEALED

LEARN LAYERING SKILLS

Create incredible subtle gradients

Colouring this good takes time and patience – **Alexandra Zutto** shows you how

Many works that look complicated are really made from simple elements. In this tutorial, Russian artist Alexandra Zutto shows how to build up complex, beautiful images by patiently layering and building up small, straightforward segments, always varying them to prevent monotony.

For this piece, which Zutto created for the *Blood Sweat Vector* exhibition in Berlin, she says: "I tried to reproduce the tundra's atmosphere, with its pale sun and soft lighting. It required looking closely at a lot of references to understand how I can achieve these kinds of effects."

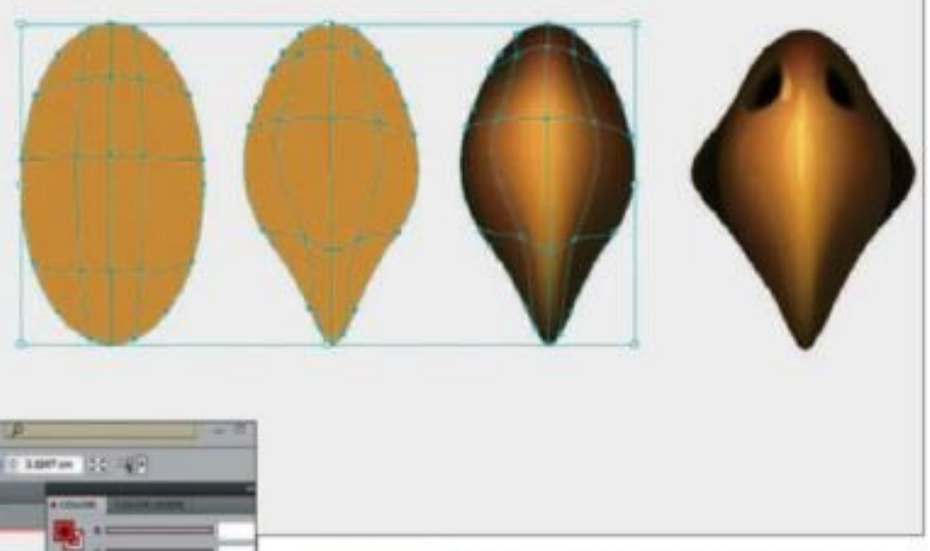
In this tutorial, you'll learn how to build up many elements to create a vector image with real depth and richness. Zutto explains: "I spend most of the time picking out colours that match each other to form harmonic colour composition. It takes a lot of time, but it's worth the effort."

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2 days

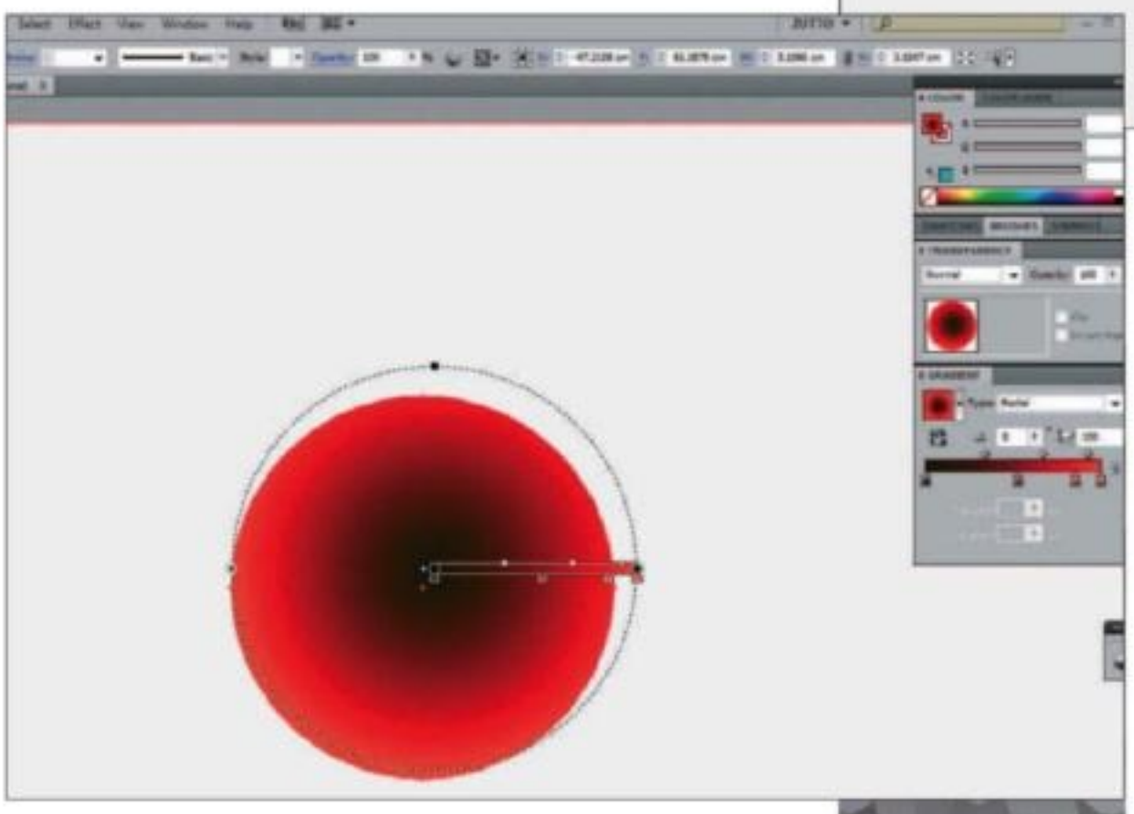
SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

"Refer to close-up photos of animals to understand how lighting goes through the eye."



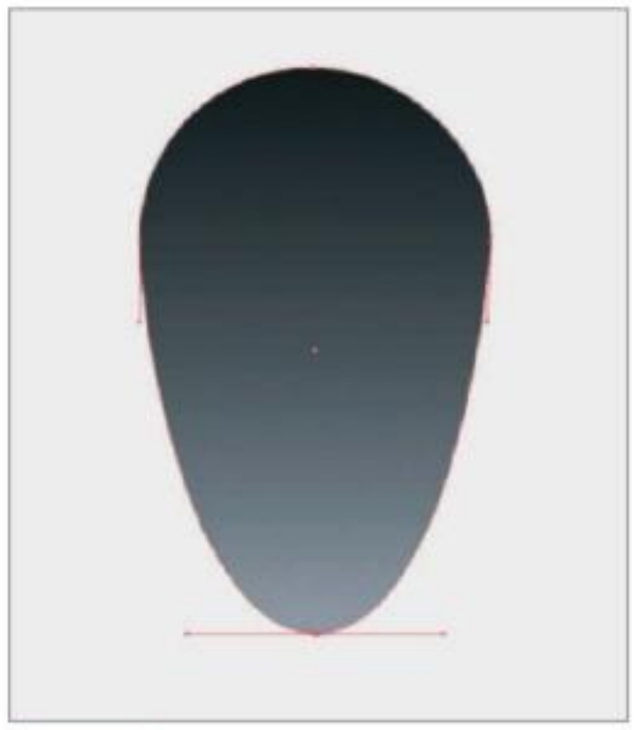
01 I recommend making sketches first to help you get the composition right: it's easier to draw nice shapes on paper than make them in software. Scan in your picture. You can adjust brightness and contrast in Photoshop and outline it with a thin, hard brush to make lines crisp if they aren't. Import it to Illustrator in an empty layer and lock it (**Cmd/Ctrl + 2**). I usually set the sketch to 30% transparency.

02 Let's start with the owl, as it's the main figure that defines the composition. Create a new layer and start drawing an eye. With the Ellipse tool (**L**) create a circle, making sure there's no stroke. Create a radial gradient using several shades. Adjust the colours and position of the sliders using the Gradient tool (**G**) and Gradient toolbar. Refer to close-up photos of animals to understand how lighting goes through the eye.

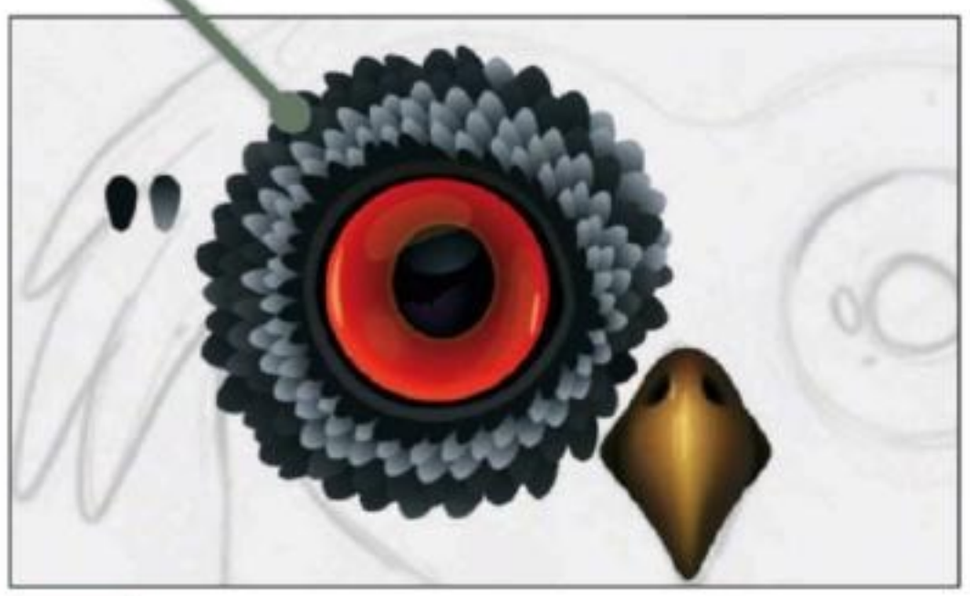


03 Using the Ellipse tool or Pen tool (**P**), draw the pupil of the eye. Then add some reflections with 10-20% transparency. To add depth, I made a glossy reflection using a radial gradient of opacity (create a two-colour gradient with the same colours and make the outer colour transparent). Select all eye shapes and group them (**Cmd/Ctrl + G**).

04 To make the beak, first draw a round shape and fill it with a base colour. Using the Mesh tool (**U**), add some columns and rows. Move mesh points with the Direct Selection tool (**A**) to get the shape of the beak, then fill the outer points with darker colours to add volume. Then add some details (such as reflections and nostrils) with the Pen tool.

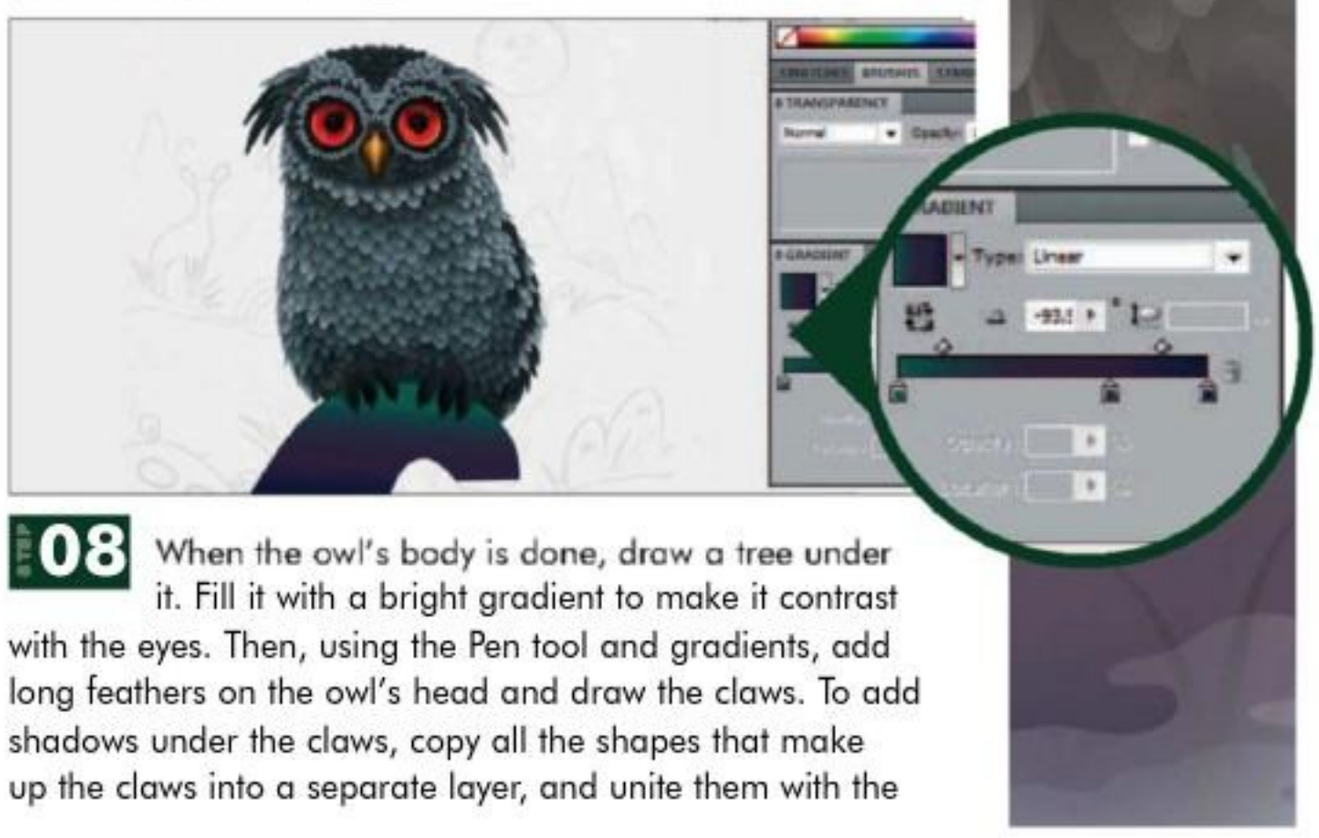


05 Now let's do the feathers. In a new layer, draw an oval and drag its bottom anchor point with the Direct Selection tool. Fill it with a gradient from top to bottom. Place the feather layer under the eye layer.



06 Hold down **Alt** and drag to make copies of the feathers. Then, using the Selection tool (**V**), distribute copies of the feathers around the eye. Adjust the scale and rotation for each feather to make them a little chaotic – this gives the picture a more realistic look. Continue adding feathers, placing them around the eye area.

07 When you've finished placing the feathers, adjust some of the gradient colours to add a little variety and contrast. To do this, I selected some of the shapes and made the gradient colours darker. Select the eye and all the surrounding feathers and make a copy (**Cmd/Ctrl + C**), then reflect them (**right-click > Transform > Reflect > Vertical**). In the same way, continue filling the owl's head and body with feathers. Spend a lot of time playing with colours, making some parts of the owl brighter or darker to create the effect of volume.



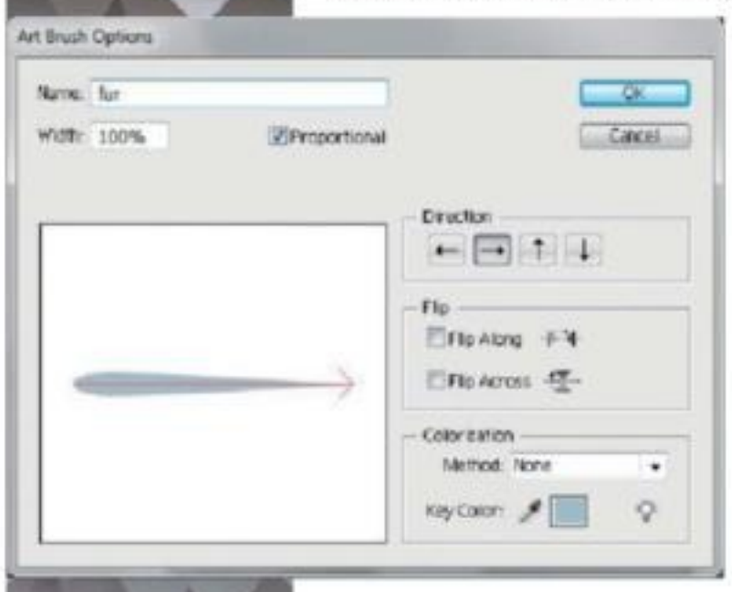
08 When the owl's body is done, draw a tree under it. Fill it with a bright gradient to make it contrast with the eyes. Then, using the Pen tool and gradients, add long feathers on the owl's head and draw the claws. To add shadows under the claws, copy all the shapes that make up the claws into a separate layer, and unite them with the

GRADIENT TIP

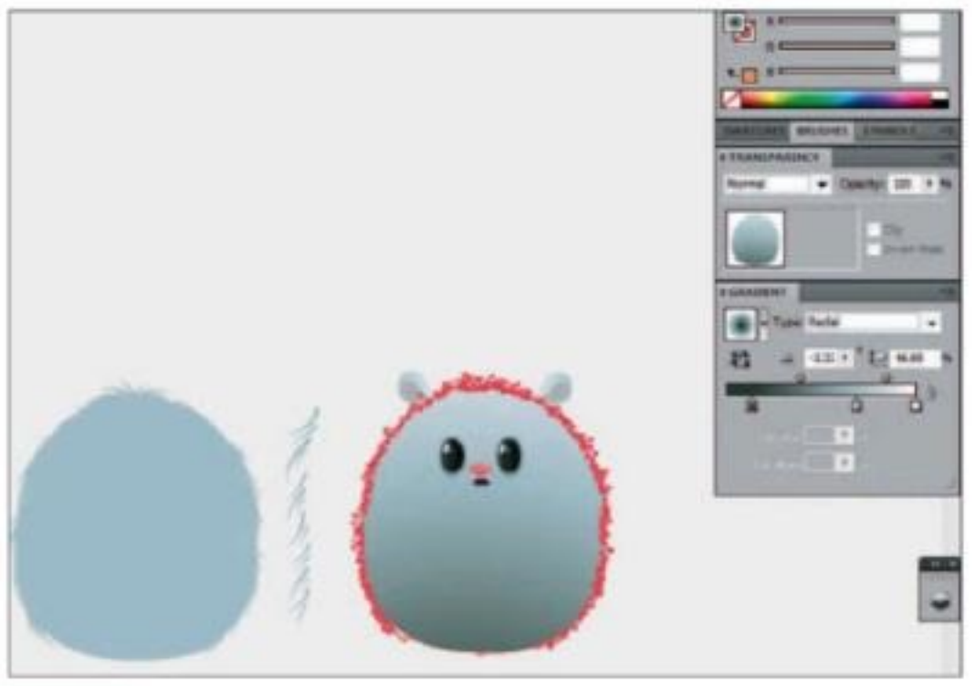
› When you're replicating elements, vary the gradient constantly to prevent them from becoming monotonous.

09 Now we need to make an atmospheric background. I want to make a tundra landscape with a sense of real depth, and soft lighting. Draw a rectangle the full size of your canvas, and place it on a new layer behind all the other layers. Fill this background shape with a gradient with the brighter colour at the top.

Draw hills using the Pen tool and fill them with gradients, making the nearer hills darker than the distant ones to add depth. Draw fog using the Pen tool, fill it with a light colour and make it transparent, placing it in front of the tree shape.

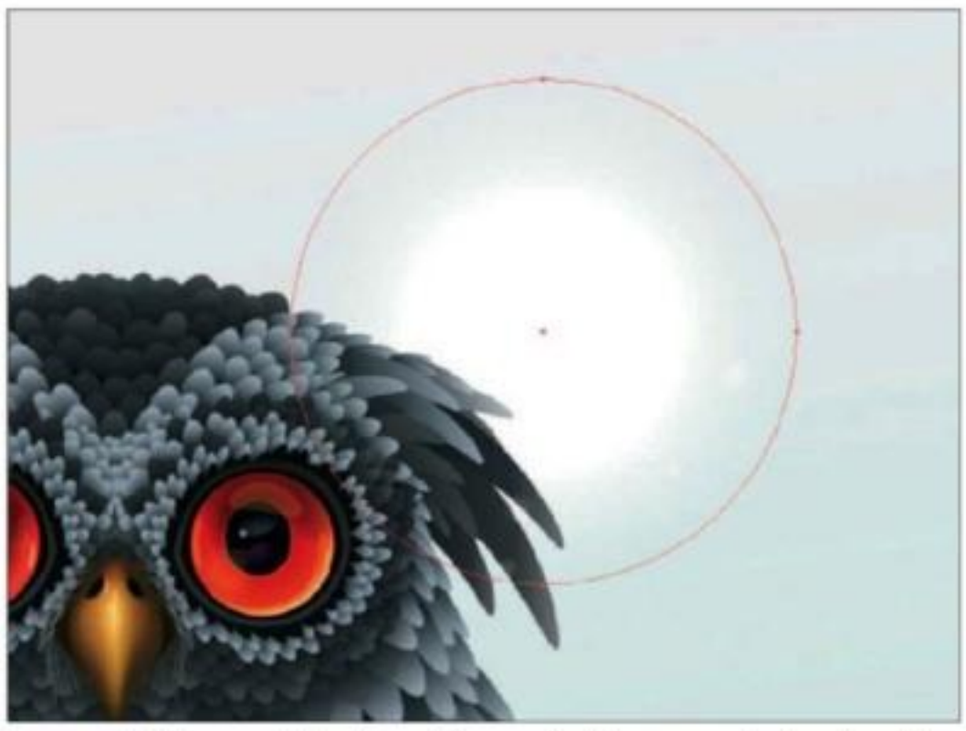


10 To make furry creatures first we need to create a custom brush. Draw the shape of the brush with the Pen tool and drag it into the Brush panel (**F5**), choosing Art Brush. In Options, choose the direction and don't forget to tick Proportional to get each brush strand a unique size.

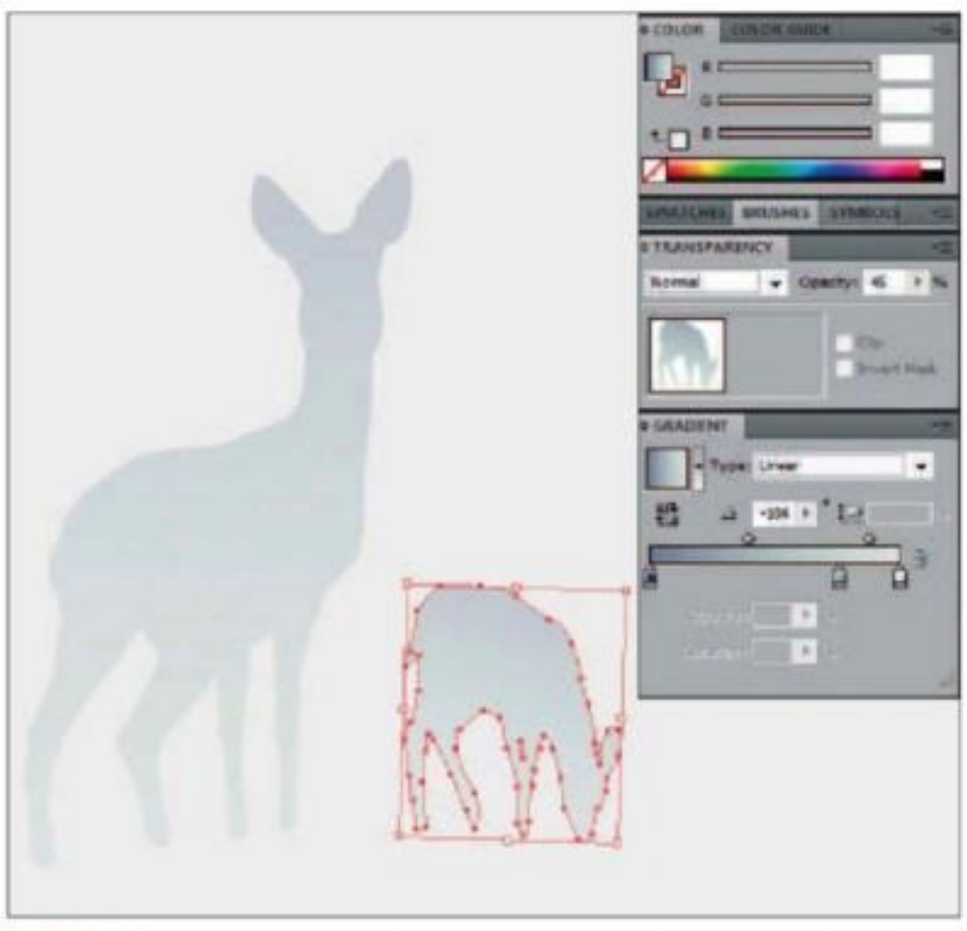


11 Make the body of the creature and, using our custom brush, draw strands around it. When all the fur is ready, select all the strands and expand them (**Object > Expand Appearance**). Then, using the Pathfinder tool, unite all the fur with the body shape. Apply a gradient and add details like eyes, ears, nose, and so on. Make several different characters with the same technique and arrange them in your composition.

STEP 12 To create the environment, begin making little elements such as grass, plants and stones. Draw several grass shapes and fill them with different gradients, using transparency to make them look as though they're shrouded in fog. Copy groups of grass to save time. Fill in the background with similar elements, making distant layers lighter.



STEP 13 The next step is adding a light source. In tundra, the light is pale and scattered. So make a simple circle and fill it with Light Radial gradient. Make the outer colour of the gradient fully transparent. Adjust the gradient sliders to give softness to the sun's shape. Use this technique to make small particles and distribute them over the picture.



STEP 14 If you want to add some other creatures such as deer in the background, find some pictures of them, and outline their shape and place them in the background.

STEP 15 To give a sense of magic, I've added some rainbows. Make some round shapes and fill them with a gradient that consists of some bright colours in the centre and is transparent inside and outside. Vary the transparency of them between 10-50%.

STEP 16 Now we need to add some finishing touches to the picture. Create some shapes in the same way as you made the sun, but in different colours. Make them nearly transparent and place them on the picture where you want to add some additional soft light. ■

PROFILE ZUTTO

Based in Miass, Russia, Alexandra Zutto is a 27-year-old freelance illustrator. Her subtle, vector-based style walks the line between sinister and cute, which has made her work particularly suited to T-shirts and other garments. She is a featured designer at clickforart.com, and her work has been made into T-shirt designs by Threadless.

CONTACT

- *zuttoworld.com*

Zutto's imaginative use of shading and layering are central to her style.
Above *A Very Long Journey.*
Right *Melted Ice Cream In The Jungle.*
Far right *New Moon.*

› LEARN VECTOR DRAWING

Create a hip, cute character

Bubblefriends-creator Sascha Preuß teaches the art of designing colourful cartoon characters and reveals the principles of cuteness

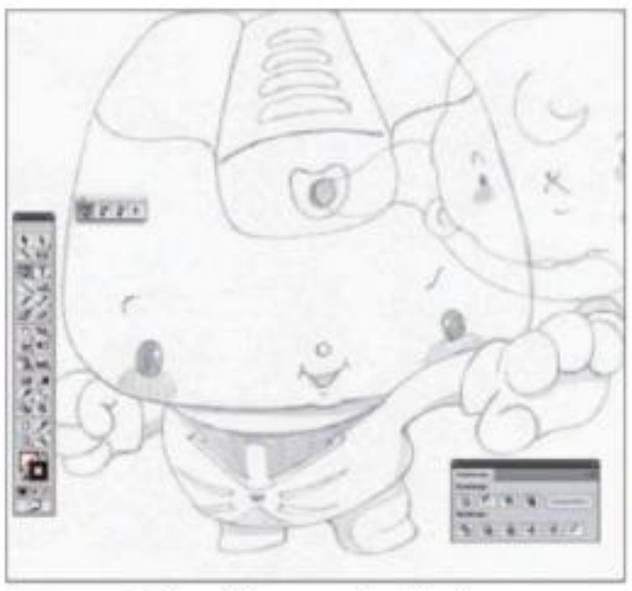
Oh how cute!" When this exclamation is heard from someone viewing an illustration by Sascha Preuß – aka Bubblefriends – he knows he's created another winning piece.

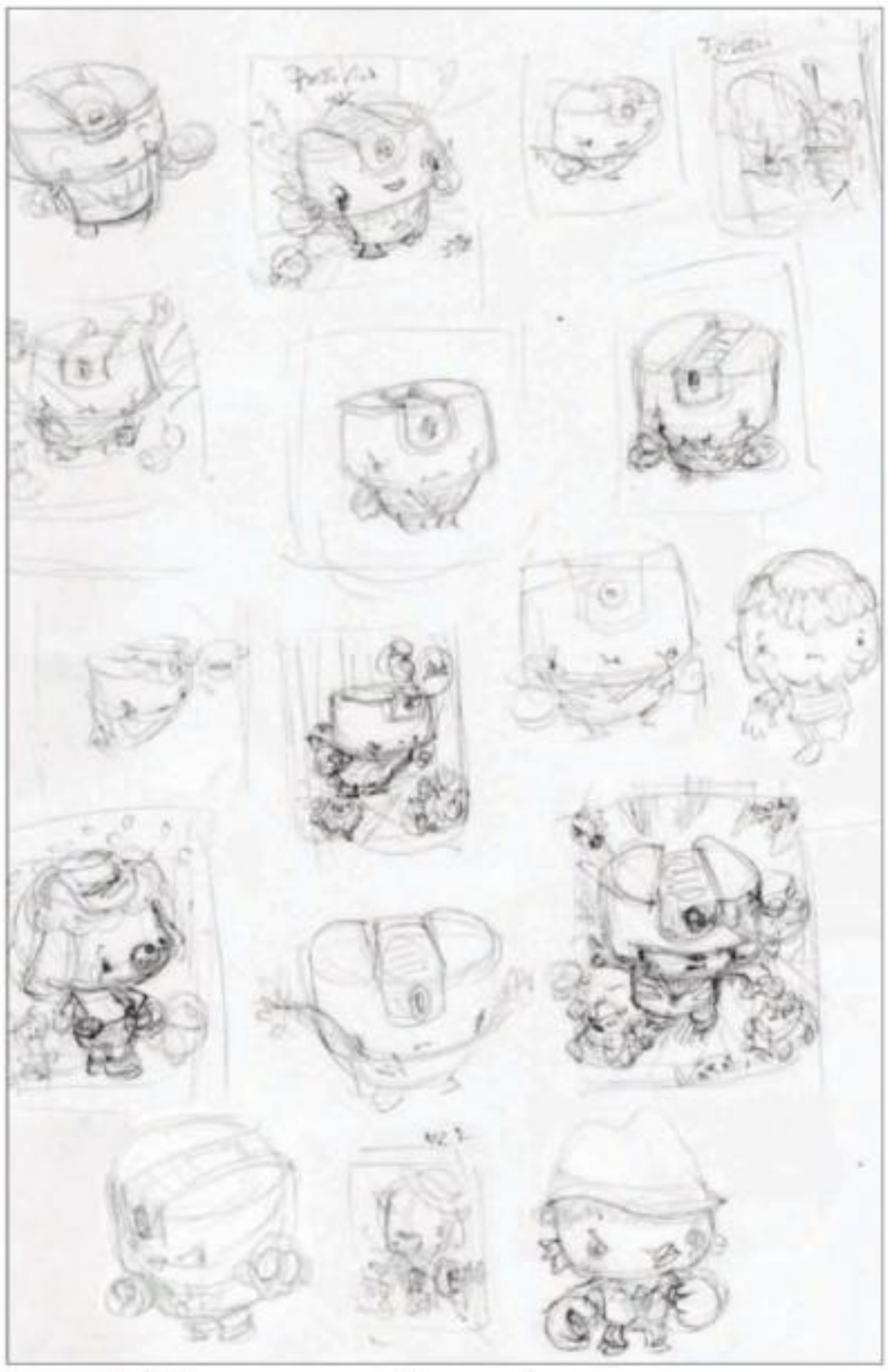
Sascha says that creating cute figures requires neither supernatural powers nor rare talents – it isn't that difficult if you follow a core set of principles. Here he reveals the rules of cuteness – plus how to stay the right side of the line between cutely hip and childishly schmaltzy. Step by step, Sascha will take you through the development of a character from the first sketch to the final colouring.

"Our small character is a can of bug spray who frightens every kind of insect with his little cloudy friend," says Sascha. "Together they put the evil guys to flight. Cute but pitiless!"

CHARACTER BUILDING

› It all begins with a pencil drawing. The accurateness of the sketch contributes to the success of a vector illustration. Problems like shading, plasticity or composition can be solved in the sketching process, so take your time. Don't start your digital work until after the pencil drawing is completed.

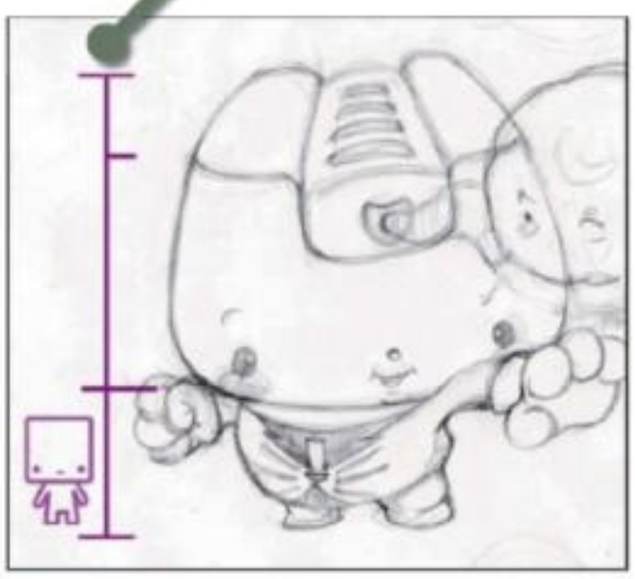




STEP 01 First, use paper and a pencil to try out some possible character designs and poses. At the beginning your sketches should be fast and fleet – then allow the characters to develop later. From my point of view, it's not necessarily required to have a story in mind before sketching.

Select one of your designs and develop your sketches, making them more accurate and precise.

› To make your character cute, think about the proportions of a baby and exaggerate the character's childlike features



STEP 02 What is cute? Cute has something of the 'newborn' about it – as without help, newborns cannot survive. Looking at a baby activates protective instincts, and it's the awakening of those instincts that usually identifies something as cute.

Cute comes from the childlike arrangement of characteristics. The size of the head is important, as in comparison to other body parts it grows slowly. For optimum cuteness, we must exaggerate and draw a head that's half the size of the whole body height.

› INFO

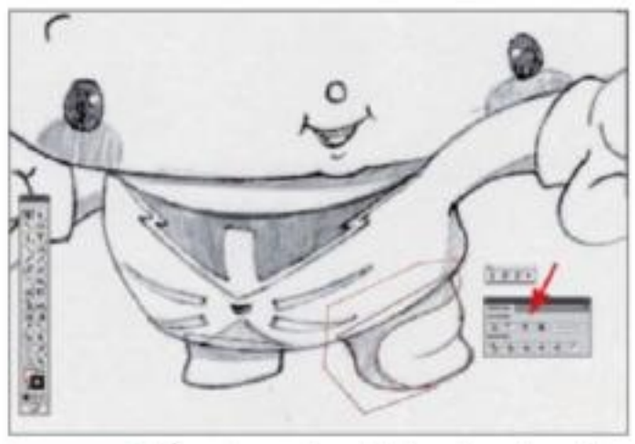
TIME TO COMPLETE
- 4 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS 2 or later

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

STEP 03 Scan in your sketch (or use mine from the project files). Open Illustrator and select **File > New** (or hit **Cmd/Ctrl + N**) to create a new document. Select an A4 portrait size and CMYK colour mode. Set Raster Effects to High (300 ppi).

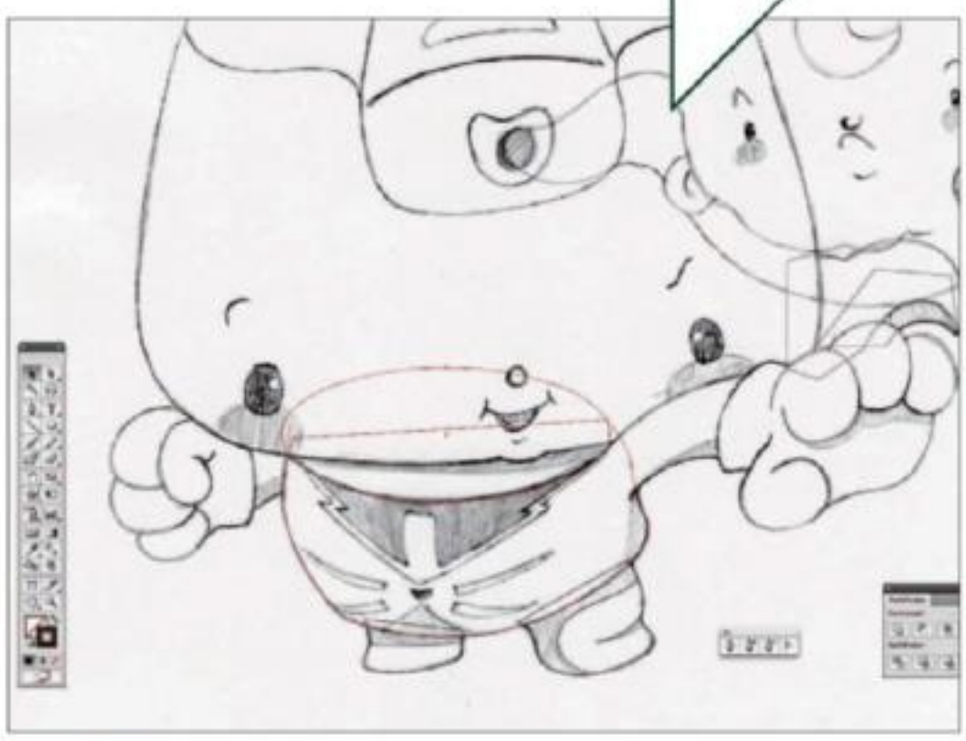
Import your sketch using **File > Place**. Go to the Layers panel and create a new layer. Lock the 'sketch' layer. The Pen and Ellipse tools and the Pathfinder panel are your main tools. Over the next steps, we'll be tracing the shapes using a stroke of 0.25pt with rounded caps and corners. We're just doing the linework and blocking out the shaded areas that represent shadows first – colours will be added after all the shapes are completed.



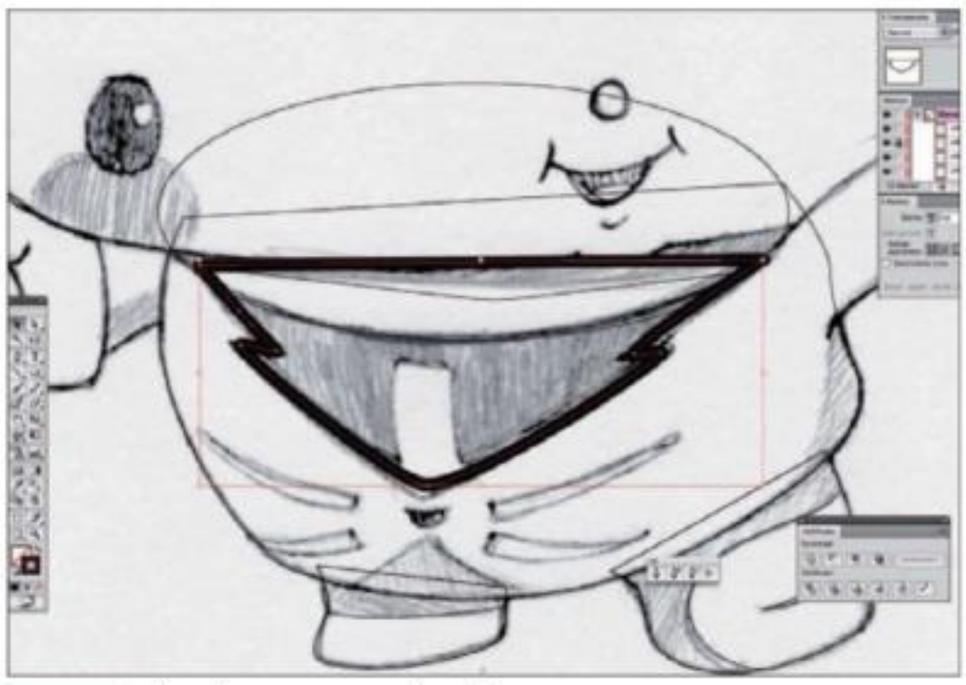
STEP 04 The legs should be short and fat so that the figure appears to be clumsy and lazy. Passivity and an impression of helplessness further brings out our protective instinct and ups the 'cute' factor.

First, draw a leg with the Pen tool (**P**), then add an area for shading in a way that they overlap each other. Select the leg, copy it and paste a duplicate in front of the original (**Cmd/Ctrl + C**, then **Cmd/Ctrl + F**). Break up the elements into separate areas by selecting them all then clicking on Divide in the Pathfinder panel. ›

"Keep your character lovable, as too many details spoil the picture. The body should appear soft and round – baby fat is cute!"



STEP 05 Draw an ellipse circling the neck with the Pen tool. Then create the torso. Keep it simple, as too many details spoil the picture. Impressive muscles won't fit in. The body should appear soft and round (baby fat is cute). Leave out the foremost arm – it will be added after the head is drawn.



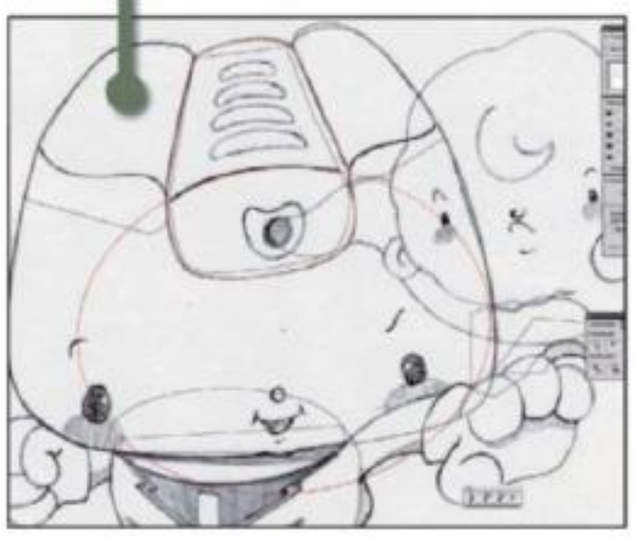
STEP 06 For the costume details, draw a dark shape with a 4pt weight using the Pen tool. Add an outline stroke (**Object > Path > Outline Stroke**). Remove its fill by changing its colour to [None], give it a 0.25pt black stroke, and delete the internal line. You should now have an empty element with just a line round it.

Draw a sloped rectangular shape and connect it to the other part of the costume details with your Pathfinder tools. Draw the other lines using the Pen tool. Ensure that everything fits to the volume of the body.

SIMPLE IS BEST

› Keep it simple! The reduction to the essentials emphasises the single elements. Children and adults likewise enjoy the little figures. Simple is cute! Besides, the characters become ageless.

› The best way to create rounded elements within others is to draw ellipses with the Ellipse tool, then draw the area you want to cut out of it. Then use the Pathfinder panel to subtract the latter from the former.

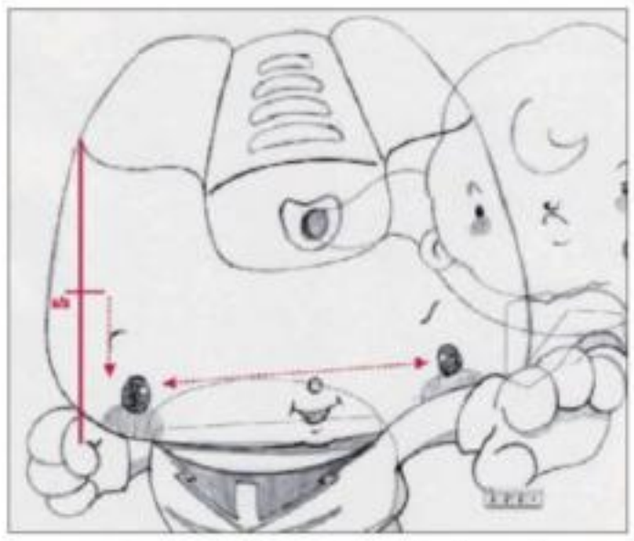


STEP 07 Draw the outline of the whole head with the Pen tool, then add overlapping kidney-shaped outlines to create the three parts of the forehead. Use the same Duplicate-then-Divide process as in Step 4 to break them into separate elements.

Repeat the procedure for the rest of the linework within the head.

STEP 08 For the four stripes on our hero's forehead, first draw a 6pt curved line with rounded edges near the top of the central forehead element, then apply an Outline Stroke. Remove its fill, give it a 0.25pt black stroke, and delete the internal line.

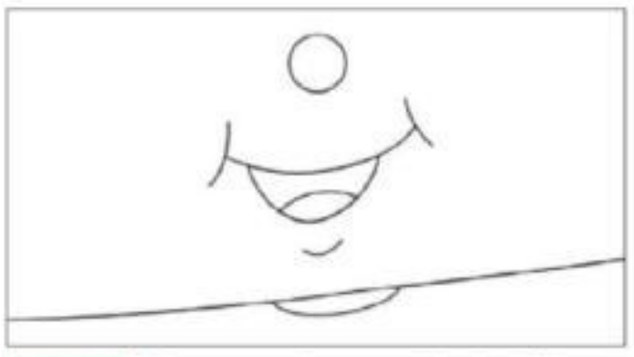
Duplicate the shape, move it below and elongate it so that it has an appropriate size relative to the shape of the forehead. Repeat this procedure to create the other stripes.



STEP 09 An adult's eyes sit almost in the middle of the head vertically, but a baby's are very low down comparatively. Here, the eyes should be positioned almost at the bottom of the face and sit far apart.

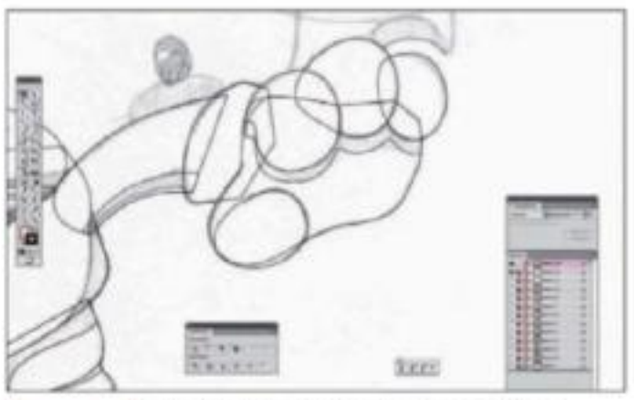
Babies also have big eyes compared to an adult – so should our character.

Draw each eye and cheek with the Ellipse tool (**L**). Duplicate and flip them with the Reflect tool (**O**).



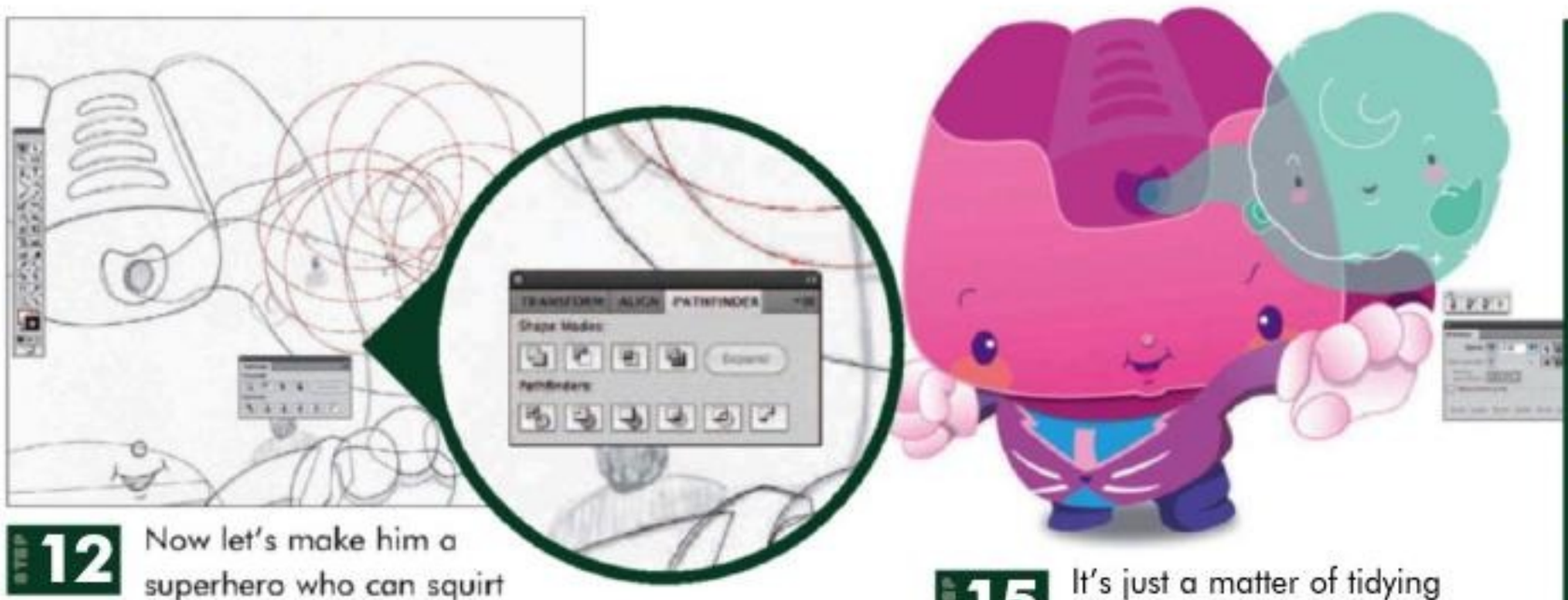
STEP 10 Draw eyebrows with the Ellipse and the Knife tools – just draw a whole circle then cut off the excess.

Now onto the mouth and nose. The nose should be small and look like a baby's snub nose. If the mouth or the teeth are too big, the figure appears dangerous. Place the mouth and nose halfway between the eyes. Create them with the Ellipse tool, Pathfinder panel and the Knife tool using the same techniques as before.



STEP 11 Draw short, round and fat arms with the Pen tool (again because of the baby-like proportions). Because of the enormous fingers relative to the hand and body, only create three fingers and a thumb in each hand. These should be blobby like a those of a chubby baby (as delicate skinny fingers like a newborn will look creepy).

Don't add too many details. Draw the palm of the hand with the Pen tool, and the fingers with the ellipse tool. Repeat the same procedures as before to create the areas that will be shaded.

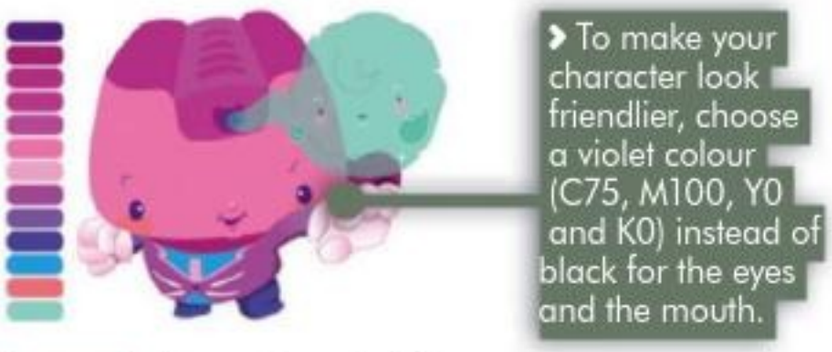


STEP 12 Now let's make him a superhero who can squirt a toxic cloud. Draw the rearmost part of the cloud with the Pen tool, then the cloud's head with the Ellipse tool. Unite them with the Pathfinder panel, copy them and then paste them in the back (**Cmd/Ctrl + C** then **Cmd/Ctrl + B**). Give the left shape of the head an outline of 1pt. Use the Knife tool to cut out 'stars' as shown.

STEP 13 To find the best combination of colour, try out some variations. The cuteness of your character can be emphasised with colour.

While high contrast colours such as red and blue are powerful and used for adult superheroes like Superman, soft colours like pink, yellow and light blue are innocent and pure – and are perfect for cute figures. Because of their tonal value, pastel colours are also useful.

However, that doesn't mean that everything has to be pink – especially if you're aiming to appeal to a more mature audience. Also, too much white takes some energy out of the picture.



› To make your character look friendlier, choose a violet colour (C75, M100, Y0 and K0) instead of black for the eyes and the mouth.

STEP 14 The main part of the illustration is magenta, as this creates no huge and uneasy contrasts. Ensure that you avoid high contrasts when colouring the other shapes. Now the elements fit to the other colours much the better.

COLOUR ME BAD

› Dispense the colours in a not too precise way, then remove the black outlines. Now you can see where gradients and shades are missing and where colours do not distinguish from each other. Working without outlines offers a picturesque touch and allows more depth to be added to your shapes.

STEP 15 It's just a matter of tidying up and overall softening now – nothing in our artwork should have sharp edges. Give the main character's face lifework a white 2pt stroke with a rounded cap and corners.

Soften the curl of the cloud with the Convert Anchor Point tool (**Shift + C**). Apply a soft gradient to the main character's head. Apply some shadows below the head and the front of the cape by copying, pasting behind and changing this new element's colour to black. Give it a Multiply blending mode with an opacity of 60%, then apply a Gaussian Blur of 5 pixels (**Effect > Blur > Gaussian Blur**).

STEP 16 We need to integrate the figure into the background. The colour of the environment is bright in order to make the overall picture appear soft – but by using blue shades, the purple central character stands out. Strong colour contrasts have been avoided in the background and secondary characters. To maintain our overall tone, ensure you also use childlike characteristics when creating the fleeing figures. ■

PROFILE BUBBLEFRIENDS

› Bubblefriends, that is Sascha Preuß. He loves creating colorful vector illustrations. Bubblefriends have fun enriching the world with always-happy figures and pictures. In doing so, Sascha does not stop at illustration, toy or game design. Happy, cute and colourful are catchwords that are inseparably connected to the works of Bubblefriends. Vector is his main stylistic form, but trips into the world of painting and sculpture also define Bubblefriends.

CONTACT

• *bubblefriends.de*

Above top "One of my favourite characters. Created for a Bubblefriends exhibition last year," says Sascha. **Above** Illustration for The Pixar Times website. "It was very funny to see my characters celebrating in a big party with the *Toy Story* guys," Sascha admits.

> LEARN BLACK AND WHITE ART

Monochrome art in Flash

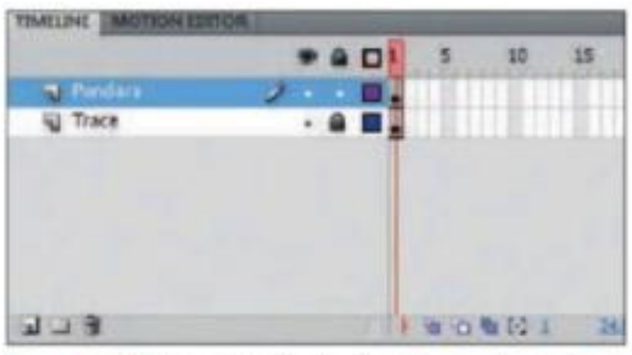
Keep things clear with black and white artwork, with **Paul Shih**

On this tutorial, character art guru Paul Shih shows how to create a detailed black-and-white artwork – using Flash. Shih says: "I personally find Flash's drawing system work best for the style we are making. It's fun and easy."

You'll learn handy tips for drawing in Flash, focusing on some essential drawing tools that make creating this artwork quick and simple. Starting with Flash's unique Line tools, we take this tool a step further by converting lines to create fills for a comic book-style 'focus lines' effect.

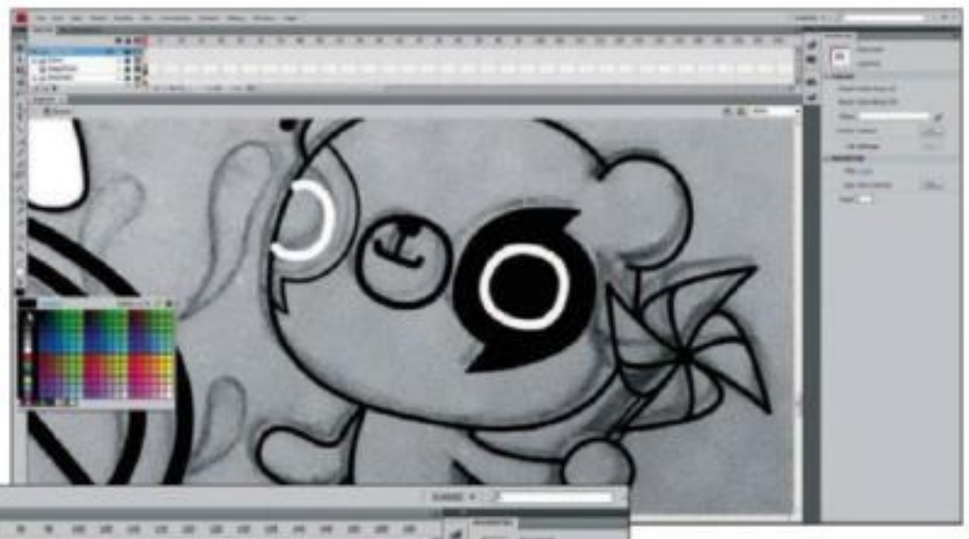
You'll also pick up tricks on maintaining visual clarity in a detailed black-and-white artwork. Feel free to embellish and add your own twists to the artwork as you create.

01 Open a new file in Flash. In the Properties window (**Cmd/Ctrl + F3**), click the Edit button and set the size to 420 x 594mm. Now import the base tracing file from the project files (*ht_trace.jpg*) by selecting **File > Import > Import to Stage** (**Cmd/Ctrl + R**), and select the imported image. In the Align window (**Window > Align > To Stage**), select Align Horizontal Center and Align Vertical Center.

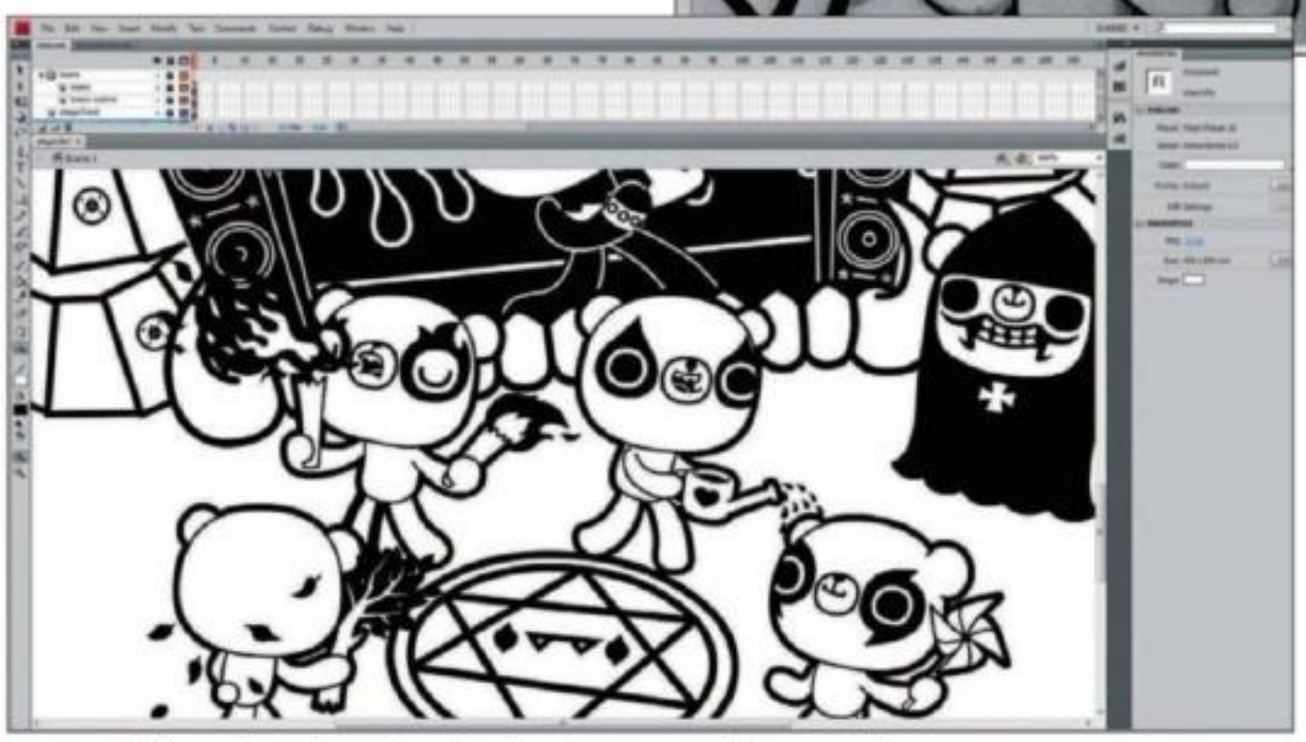


02 For detailed drawings, layering is vital. Flash manages layers in the Timeline window: rename and lock the tracing layer, then create a new layer for each element. Drawing in Flash is easy: using the Line tool (**N**), click and drag to create a straight line; click on the line and drag it to make a curve. Use the Line tool or Pen tool to trace all the elements apart from the focal lines.

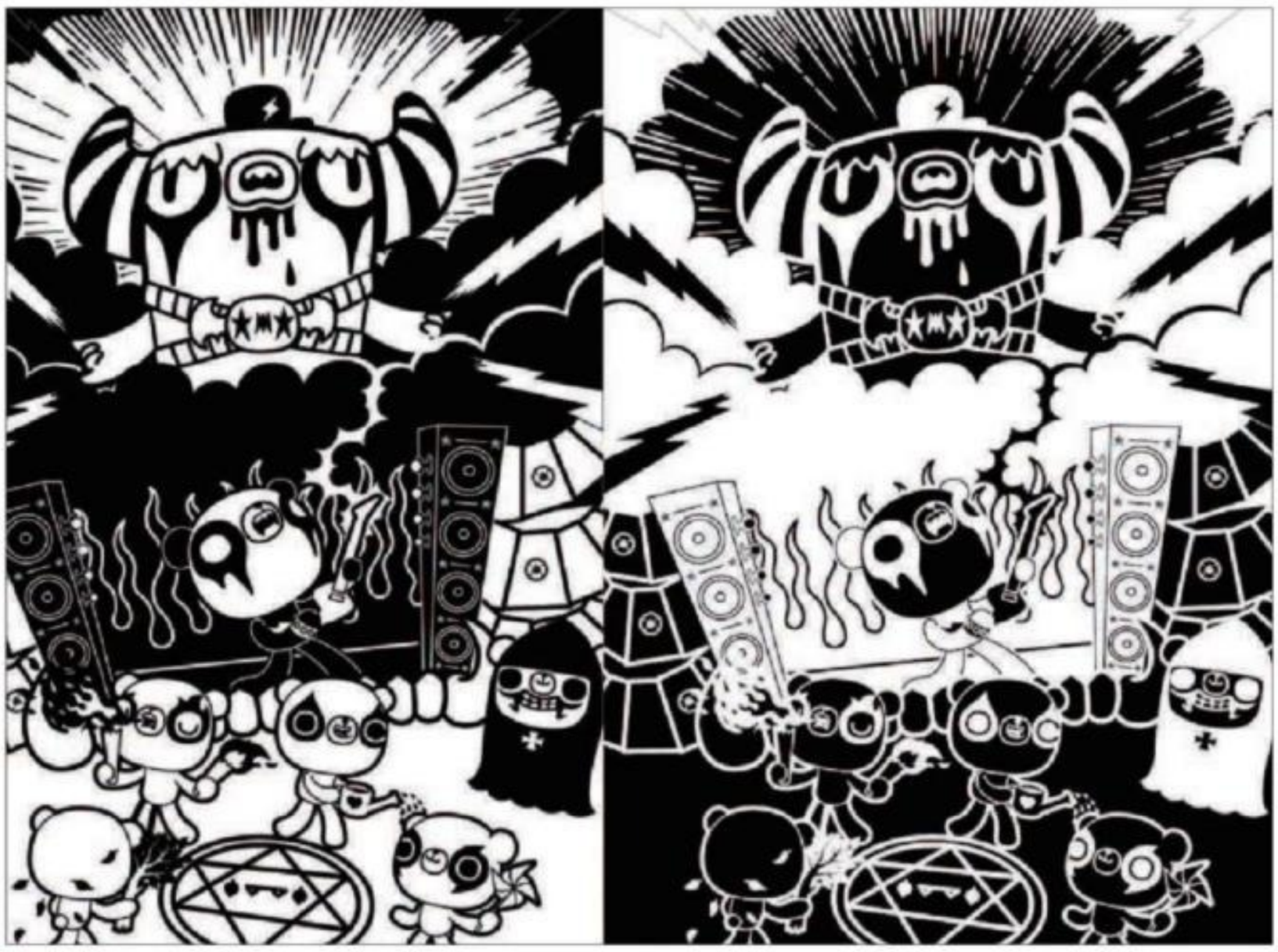
03 Now let's create the focal lines. Use the Line tool to create a short vertical line at the point all the lines point to. Lock this layer and, in a new layer, draw black lines that drag out from the red focal point. Select all the lines, increase their line size to 8pt, and erase parts of the lines to make their length irregular. Select **Modify > Shape > Convert Lines to Fills**. Drag the edge point of each line to make them narrower at one end.



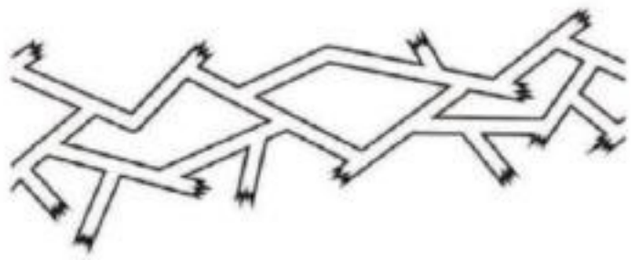
STEP 04 Now you've traced all the elements, they're ready to ink up – this is essentially colouring-in. Choose the colour – in this case we're only using black and white. Use the Paint Bucket tool (**B**) and click on the closed areas you've traced to fill with the paint.



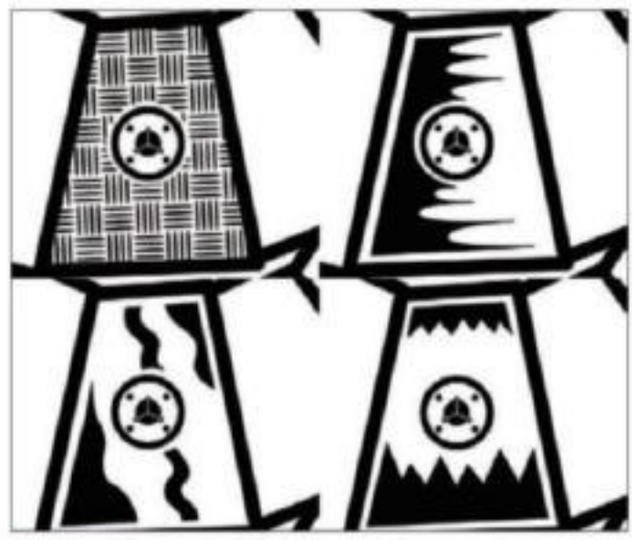
STEP 05 To make elements stand out more and to separate them from their surroundings, thicken the outline of all elements, select an element, copy (**Cmd/Ctrl + C**), and create a new layer underneath, Paste the element in place (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + V**), increase the line size to your preference – I use 12pt for bear characters, and 15pt for the monster on top.



STEP 06 The artwork should be all inked up now – but you might feel that the colouring isn't quite perfect yet. Let's invert it. Select **File > Export > Export to Image**, and name it *invert.ai*. Open this file in Photoshop, and select **Image > Adjustments > Invert**. This trick is particularly useful for black-and-white images: you may find some parts work better this way than in the original, so adapt your Flash image accordingly.



STEP 07 Look for empty spaces – be creative, add some new elements to balance the positive and negative spaces. To create the metal pipes in middle, use the Line tool (**N**) to create some random pipe lines and increase the line size to 17pt. Convert the lines to fill, use the Ink Bottle tool (**S**) and click on the fills: this creates lines around the fill. You may want to import the PANDARA logo to your composition – it's in the project files (*pandara.eps*).



STEP 08 Finish up by adding some textures – 8-bit video games are good source of inspiration for this art style. Materials rendering is usually flat and simple, yet it symbolises materials so well. Once this is all done, it's a good idea to repeat the Photoshop Invert trick, play around, adjust it to your preference – and you'll have a unique *Hollow Threat* artwork. ■

INFO PAUL SHIH

New Zealand-based artist and designer Paul Shih is originally from Taiwan. His work is about events and characters, and is inspired by his surroundings. He says that this artwork, *Hollow Threat*, takes him back to his original love of drawing and doodling.

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 8-10 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Flash, Photoshop

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 8-10 hours

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 5 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator

> **LEARN** QUIRKY VECTORS

Design symmetrical character art

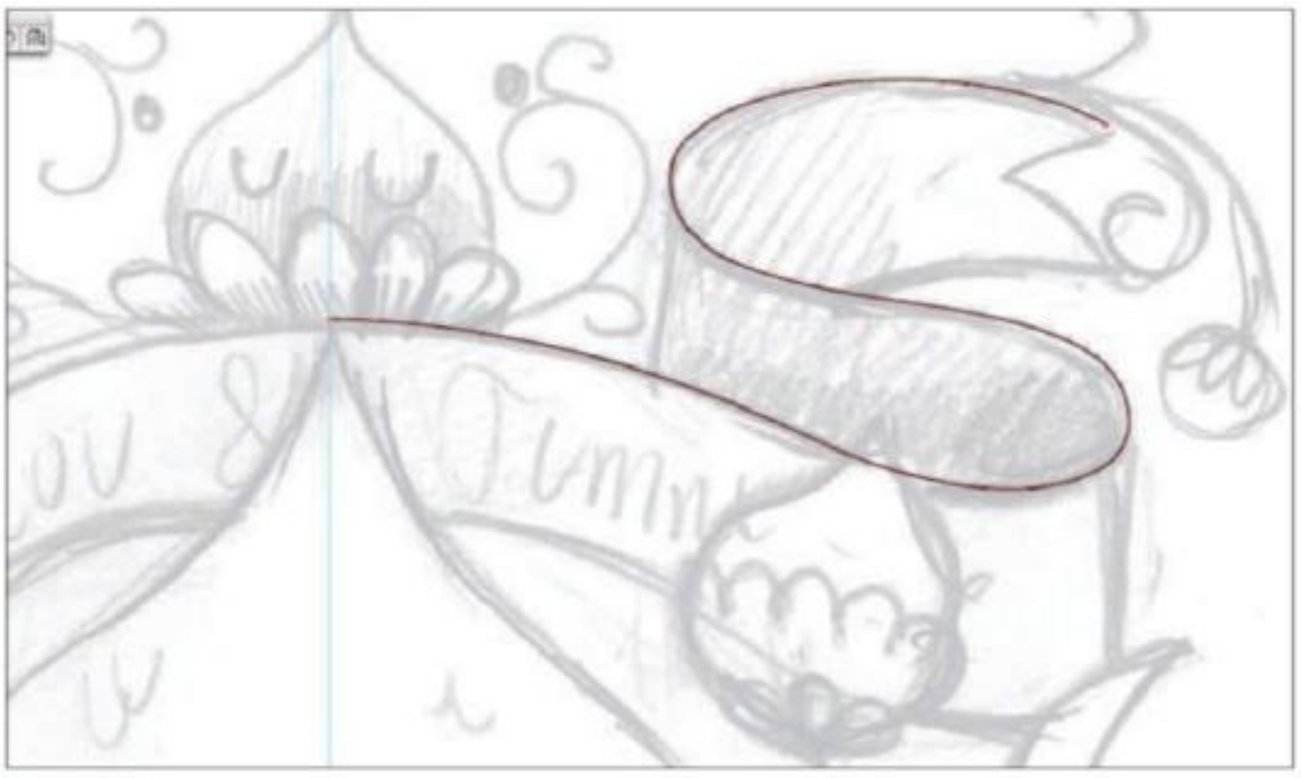
LouLou & Tummie create perfectly balanced characters

The beauty of this image lies in its simplicity: it's so clean and neatly proportioned that it radiates effortless charm. One key reason for its clear-cut appeal is its symmetry – by its very nature it's balanced and orderly, but it retains a sense of movement. It's also got a sort of comical formality, partly because its symmetry and background make it look almost like a heraldic crest.

In this tutorial, creative duo LouLou & Tummie show you how to use Illustrator to create a symmetrical, character-filled banner. You'll hone your use of the Pathfinder tool to build new shapes, and tweak lines to give them a sense of flow.

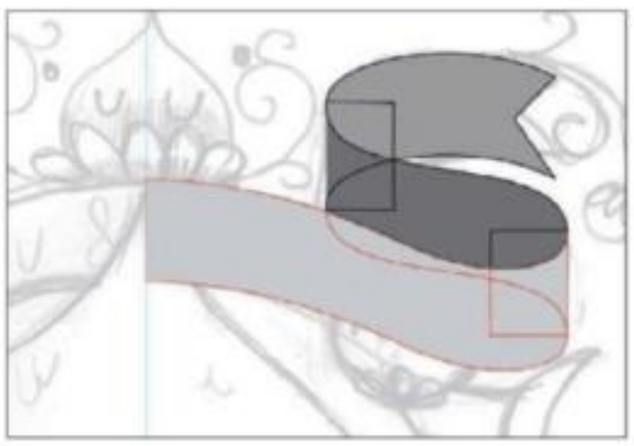
The tricks you'll learn are useful in a range of other vector-based illustrations, helping you to create art that is clean but not stilted.

To start, you'll need to get some reference images of plants and flowers and draw yourself a rough sketch to base the tutorial on.



STEP 01 Import your sketch into a new Illustrator document, and set the opacity to 30%. Place a guideline in the middle of your artboard and align your image so that its centre is on the guideline. This guideline will be the pivotal element of your whole illustration. Use the Pen tool to trace the upper part of the banner on the right-hand side.

STEP 02 Hold down **Shift + Alt/Opt** and drag the line to copy it. This will be the bottom line of the banner. Select the endpoints and join them (**Cmd/Ctrl + J**). Close the two 'open' sides of the banner by drawing two shapes over it. Make sure nothing sticks out of the banner. Select all (**Cmd/Ctrl + A**) and go **Window > Pathfinder > Divide**, then ungroup.

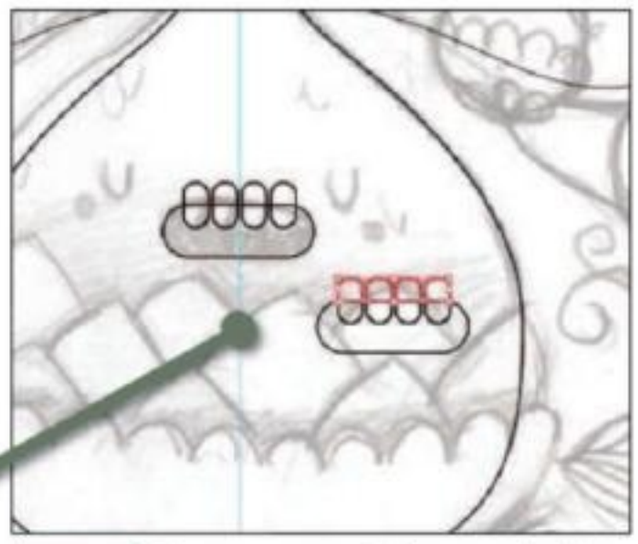


STEP 03 The banner is now composed of three parts: top, middle and bottom. Select the pieces that belong to the bottom part and choose Add to Shape in Pathfinder. Click Expand. Repeat for the two other parts. Select all and click on the Reflect tool then, while holding **Alt/Opt**, click on the guide in the middle. Choose **Vertical > Copy**.

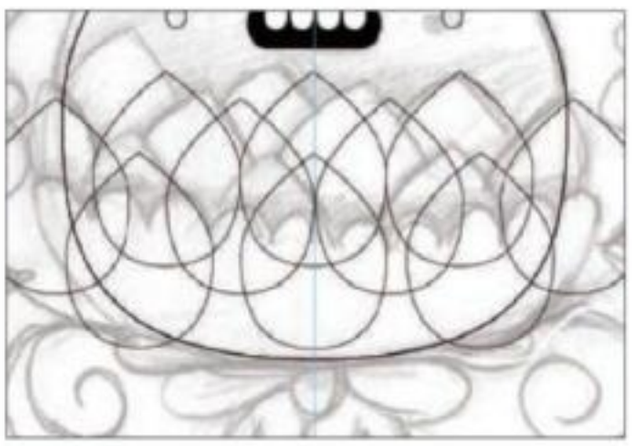
> Make sure everything is centred at all times.

STEP 04 Draw the right–hand side of your central flower or figure, making sure you start on the guideline. Drag as you place the second anchor point, so that you can make smooth, flowing lines that you can then adjust later.

It's best to place as few anchor points on a curve as you can – this makes it flow better. Reflect the line vertically on the guideline (as in Step 3). Select and join the endpoints.

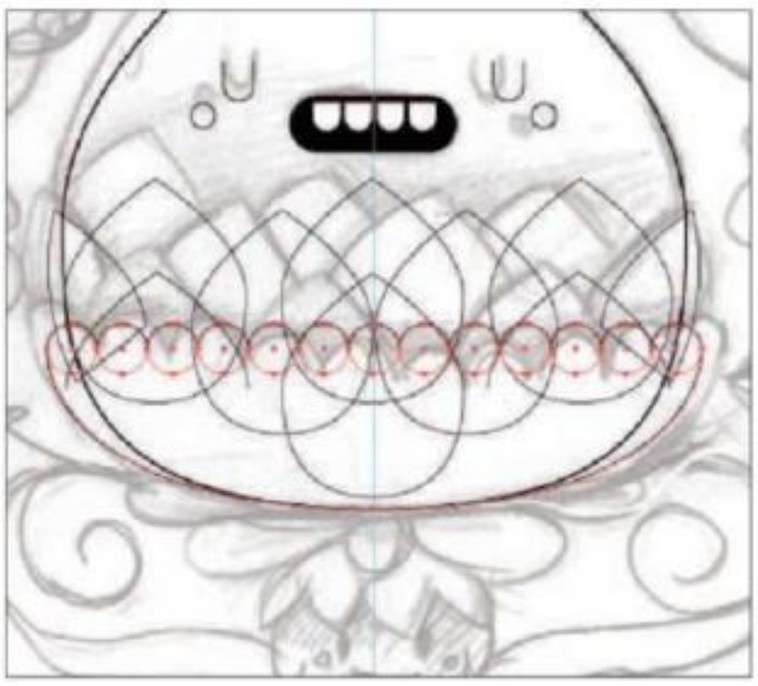


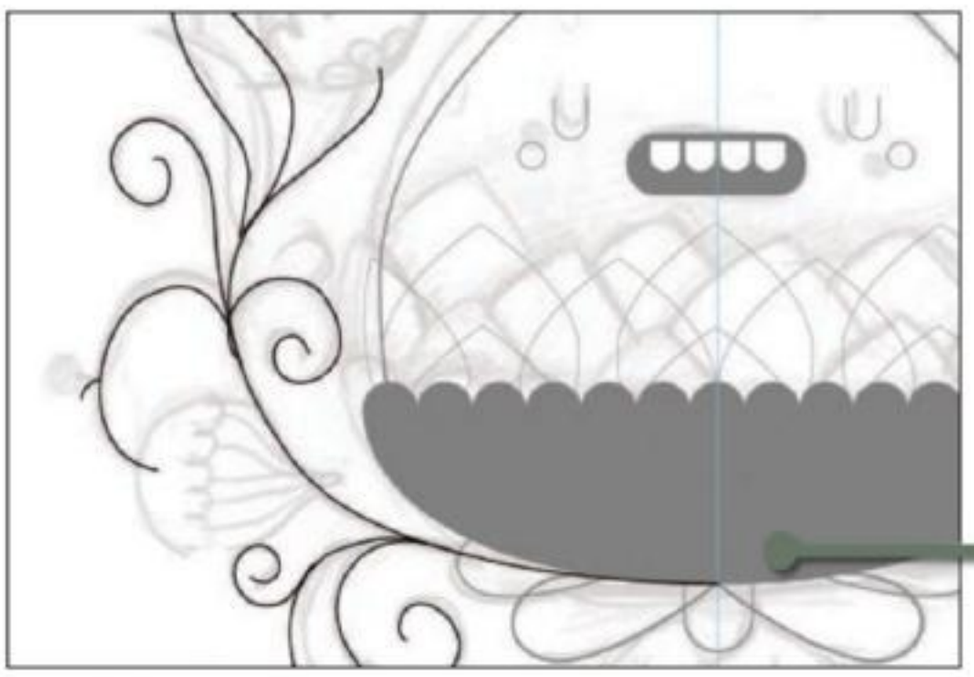
STEP 05 Drag a rounded rectangle for the mouth and a smaller one for the teeth. Drag and copy the 'tooth' (**Shift + Alt/Opt**), then **Cmd/Ctrl + D** to repeat this. Copy the mouth and teeth, choose Divide in the Pathfinder tool and ungroup. Delete the parts you don't need and place the teeth back in the mouth.



STEP 06 Create a leaf by dragging a circle, then using the Convert Anchor Point tool (**Shift + C**) and clicking on the top anchor point of the circle. Select this anchor point and nudge it up a little to give the leaf a point, making it a teardrop shape. Place the leaf according to your sketch and make multiple copies. Adjust the outer leaves so that they fit your sketch. ›

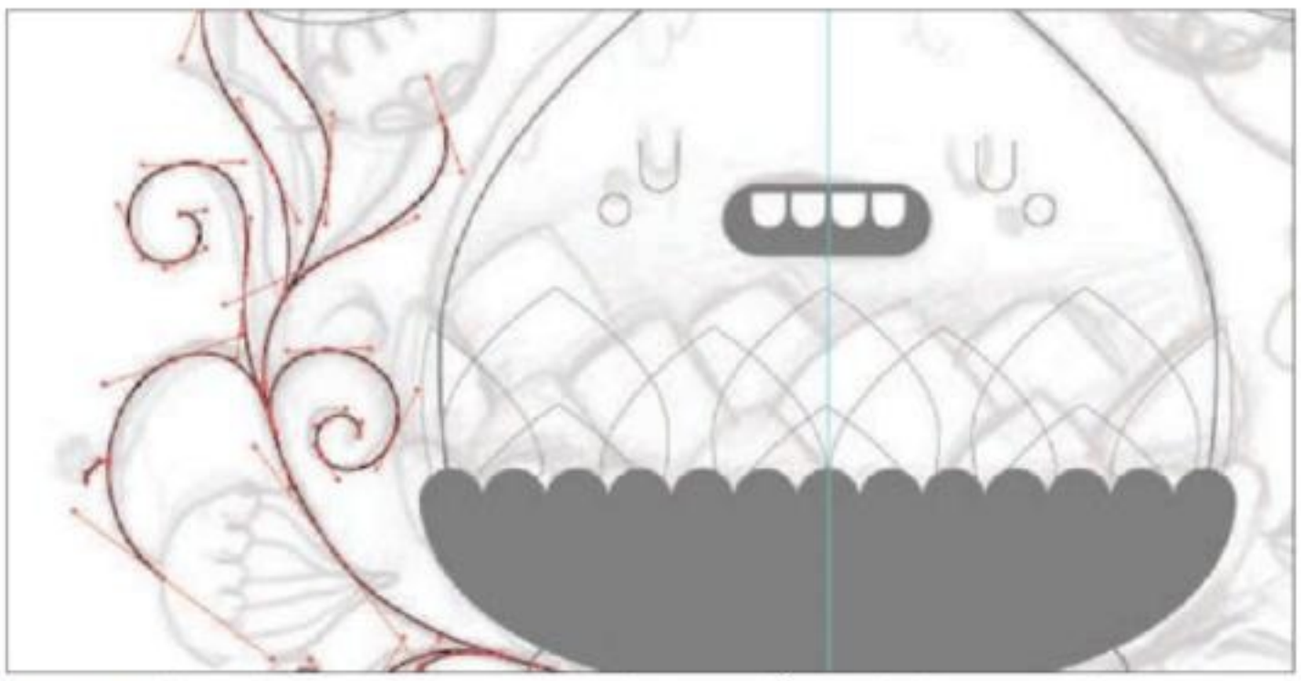
STEP 07 Drag a small circle. Select it and grab it by the left anchor point. Hold **Shift + Alt/Opt** and move the circle to the right until it snaps to the furthest right anchor point and release. Use the **Cmd/Ctrl + D** to copy this action. Draw a curve and reflect it to create the bottom part of the flower, then join the endpoints. Select all the circles and the bottom shape and then select **Pathfinder > Add to Shape > Expand**.





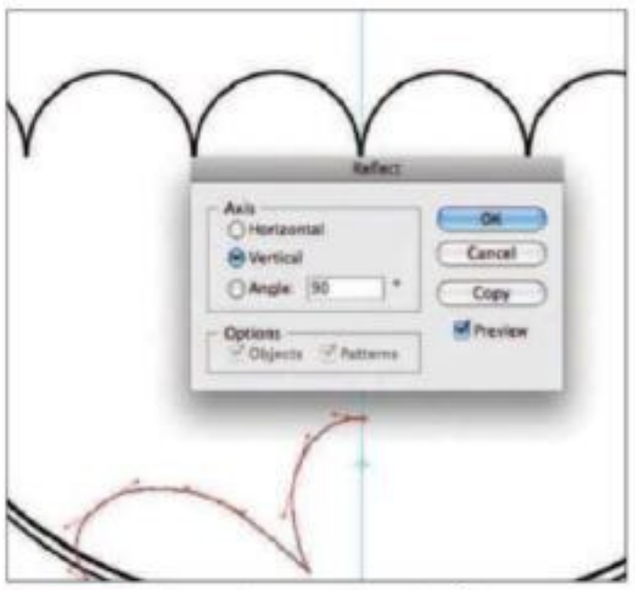
Creating organic shapes is much easier with a graphics tablet.

STEP 08 Now let's draw the swirly vines. Again, we draw only the left (or right) side of the illustration and then reflect it. Try to draw lines by hand using the Pencil tool as this gives a more spontaneous feel to your image. They don't have to be perfect, but try to limit the amount of adjusting they need.

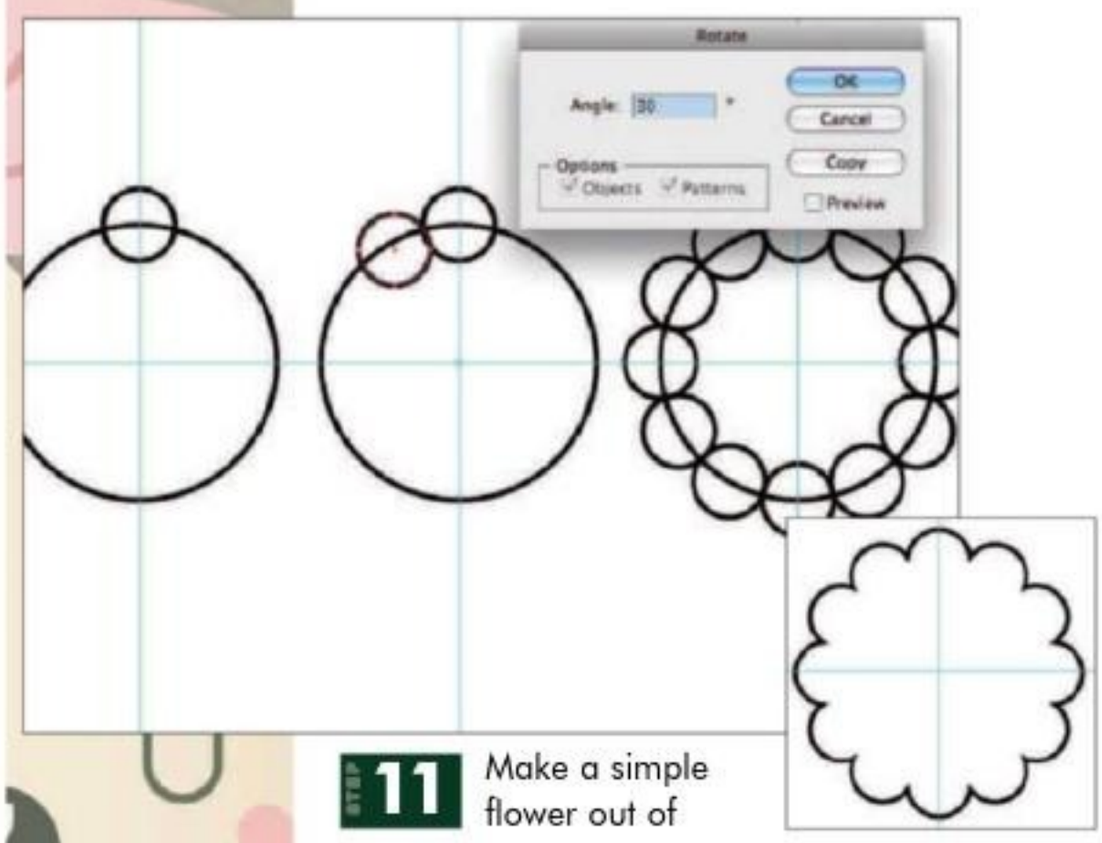


STEP 09 Next, clean up the points you don't need from the lines – use Delete Anchor Point (-) from the Pen menu. Fewer anchor points means a better flow. Drag the curve handles on the anchor points (use the white arrow) and tweak them until the lines have the right flow. This will take some time and practice.

"Try to draw lines by hand using the pencil tool as this gives a more spontaneous feel to your image"



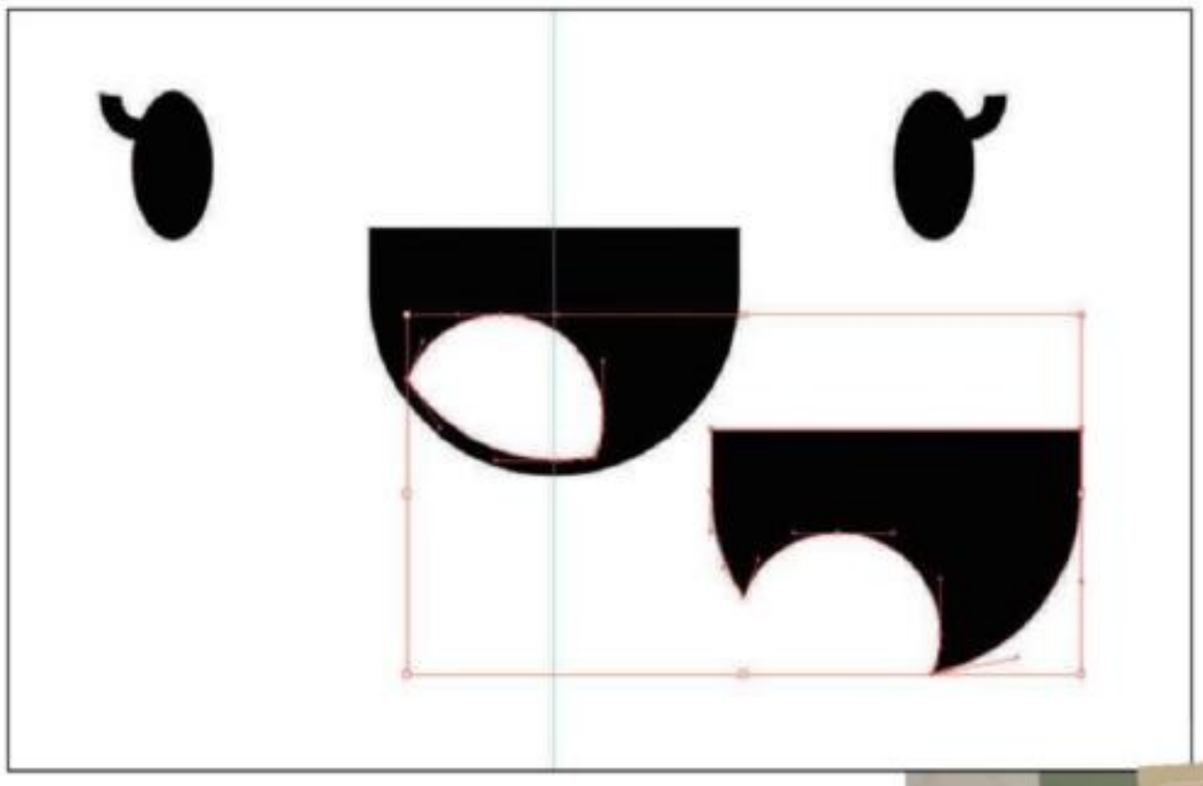
STEP 10 Now let's make the flowers to go with the vines. This can all be done the same way as we made the other shapes before. You can either copy the central figure, resize it and add some new detail, or you can play around with new shapes if you prefer.



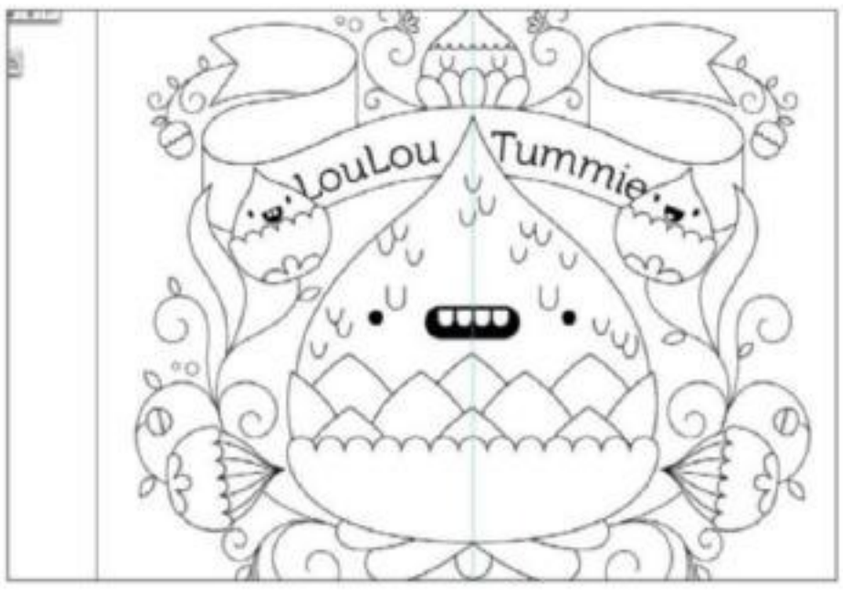
STEP 11 Make a simple flower out of circles. Create a circle and drag a guide from the top and side to the middle of the circle. Centre a small circle on the top anchor point of the bigger one. Tap **R** and **Alt/Opt + click** in the middle of the big circle, then rotate it 30°. Repeat this (**Cmd/Ctrl + D**) until you have enough circles. Select all and in the Pathfinder palette select **Add to Shape > Expand**.

STEP 12 Finish all the flowers, leaves and curls on one side of the illustration. When you feel this side looks good, select all the flowers, curls and vines and use the Reflect tool to copy and flip it.

STEP 13 Now for the faces. Create a mouth, as in Step 5. Draw the eye, the freckles and cheek on the left side and then reflect them to the right. Again, use a guide in the middle to keep the face symmetrical – this is a great timesaver. Group the face (**Cmd/Ctrl + G**) and place it on the flower. Rotate it (**R**) to fit.



STEP 14 You will need to add some details to finish the illustration. Placing these randomly, rather than perfectly symmetrically, will liven up your illustration. These could be little leaves, dots, scales, extra curls – whatever you fancy.



STEP 15 Now adjust the line weight to get it just right. Also, check that your shapes are fully closed by making them black – if the lines aren't properly connected then the black will fill the artboard. You may need to reorder some of the shapes, moving them to the front or back.

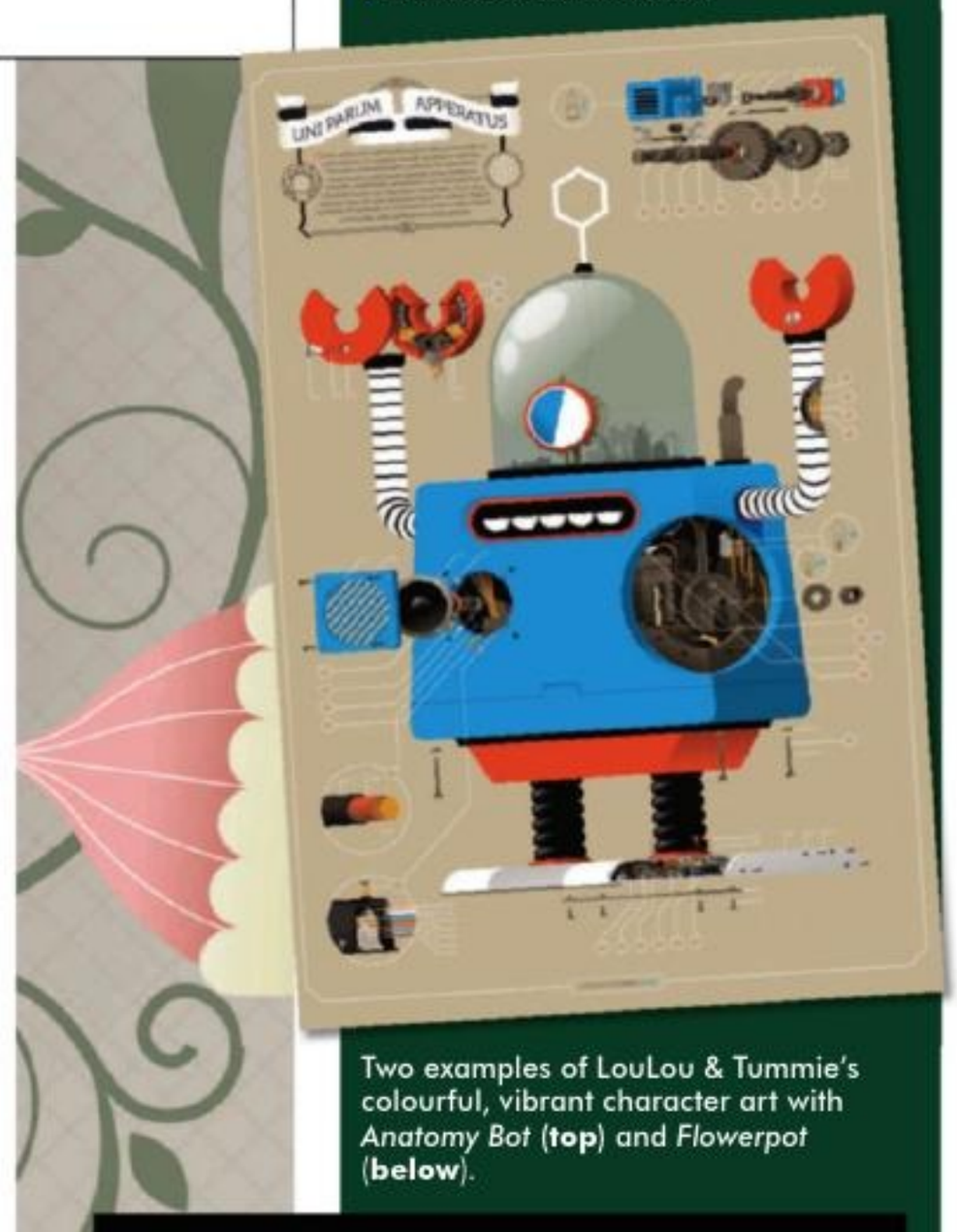
STEP 16 When you're happy with the illustration in black-and-white you can start colouring. Some people prefer to colour as they go along, but you can often get a better feel for the lines and shapes when they're black and white. Colouring is also much faster when your composition is already finished.

PROFILE LOULOU & TUMMIE

› Dutch illustration duo LouLou & Tummie are developing an ever-expanding empire of colourful graphics and characters. Led by their passion for toys, happiness, and all things cute or robot-like, they create upbeat graphics for magazines, books, ads, plushies, T-shirts and more.

CONTACT

• *loulouandtummie.com*



Two examples of LouLou & Tummie's colourful, vibrant character art with *Anatomy Bot* (**top**) and *Flowerpot* (**below**).

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE

- 2-3 hours

SOFTWARE

- Adobe Illustrator CS4 or higher, Photoshop CS4 or higher

PROJECT FILES

- Files for this tutorial can be downloaded from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> **LEARN** LINES, SHAPES AND TEXTURES

Create cartoon figures with ease

Mercedes Crespo shows how you can swiftly draw an appealing character based on a few simple shapes

On this tutorial, Mercedes Crespo (aka YemaYema) shows how she creates her appealing cartoon characters. Though full of detail, rich in colour and complex in appearance, they are simple to draw, as she reveals here.

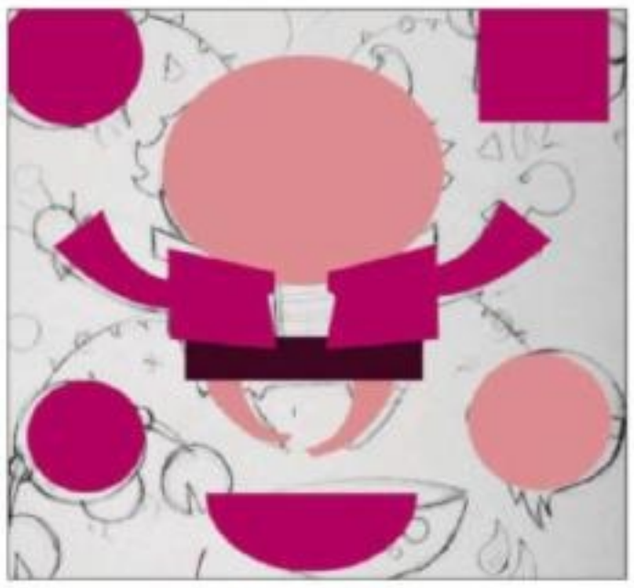
With just the Pencil tool plus basic shapes and a good eye for colour and composition, you can make your illustrations go a long way. Mercedes stresses the importance of having fun and playing around with shapes. It is possible to achieve great things when you least expect it and exploring is a good way of allowing this to happen.

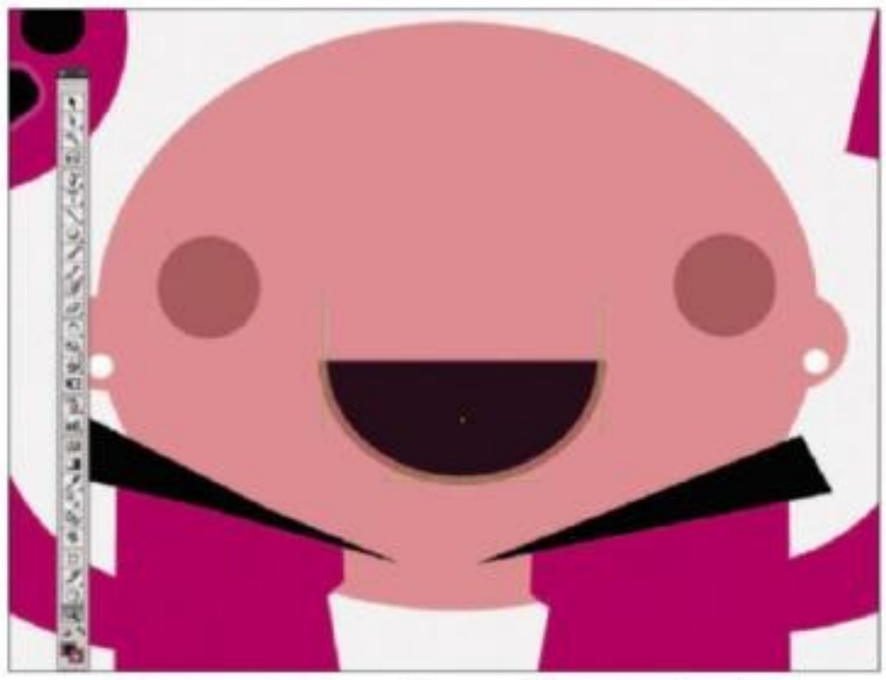
In our project files, you'll find Mercedes' original sketch and a texture file you'll use to add depth to your composition.

"I start with a quick sketch, just something done quickly to get an idea down"

STEP 01 First I start with a quick sketch (available from the Download Zone), containing basic shapes that will determine the composition and how the character will look. I try to leave it open for revision, and it isn't meant to look finished. It's just something done quickly to get an idea down.

STEP 02 In Illustrator, select **File > Place**, bring the sketch into what will be a background layer and lock it. Create a new layer where you will create basic shapes that trace out the image, for example just a circle for the head, a rectangle for the shorts. Remember to play with the composition and change things if you need to.





STEP 03 Start adding the simplest details to the character – two circles will do for eyes, while for the mouth, create a circle and split it. Now select the Pen tool and click on both ends to close it up.

STEP 04 Hide the background layer where the sketch is. Now let's focus on the torso. Grab the Pen tool and create a shape for the shirt. Just trace the outer corners of the jacket to create the inner white shape. Adjust with the Direct Selection tool; you need to have precise and clean lines. Work with the neck of the coat as you need to.

STEP 05 Now we are going to add more detail using the same technique I used to create the white shirt. To give the coat an 'inner outline', use the Pen tool and a darker colour. For the cheeks, create a circle in a contrasting colour and then another circle inside that in an even richer hue.

STEP 06 Now we are going to start fleshing out our little pirate. For the hair, just draw a swirly shape. Add more detail to the eyes by creating more circles that act as white reflections. For the teeth, simply create rectangles. Incidentally, I freehand a lot so I also make sure to remove surplus anchor points using the Pen tool.

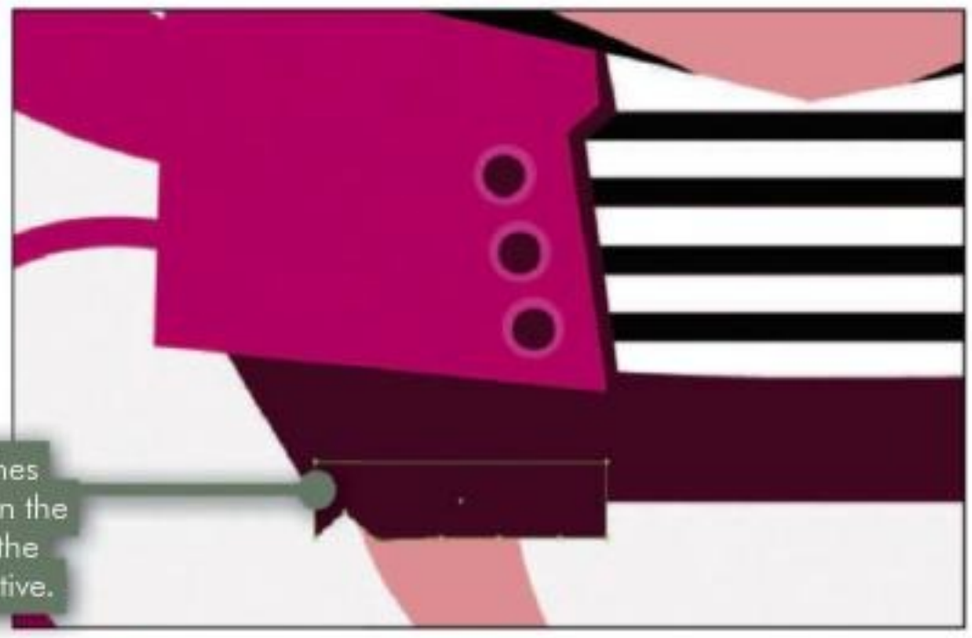
STEP 07 To add more detail to the hair, you can create more locks and strands with the Pencil tool. Be creative and once again, remember to remove surplus anchor points. For the nose, let's use simple triangles.

STEP 08 To create the character's hook, draw a rectangle for the base and make it taper. Then add an ellipse to give a bit of shading and depth. To fit it flush against the sleeve, just group the objects that make the hook's base (hold **Shift** and select, then **right click > Group**) and move them together.

REPEAT SHAPES

› When repeating a shape, it's easiest to select it and then hold **Alt** and drag off a new element. Duplicating like this saves time; just be sure not to go overboard with it, as repetition can be boring.

STEP 09 Create eyelashes by adding small triangles around the eye, which will also serve as shading. Connect the minor characters to our pirate using arcs (create a circle, delete the colour inside and then delete one of the four anchor points).



› By adding little touches such as frayed edges in the shorts, you can make the character more distinctive.

STEP 10 Keep making the character more interesting by adding a bit more detail. To finish the trousers, create a rectangle and then select the Pen tool and add anchor points to the base of the rectangle. Then move every other anchor point here upwards to create the ripped effect.

STEP 11 To create the water, select the Pencil tool and freehand big drops of water, then add some detail to them. Let's give our pirate some highlights on the trousers and coat, too, by adding zigzag shapes in a colour that stands out. Also finish the nose by creating more triangles.

STEP 12 Now it's time to add clouds and other decorations. Copy and Paste and place where desired, paying attention to the composition. Make it fun – experiment, play with shapes and let your creativity guide you.

STEP 13 Happy with your design? If so, that's as far as we're going to go in Illustrator. Now we'll import the file into Photoshop to add texture.

STEP 14 In Photoshop, open *texture layer.psd* from the Download Zone. Select All, then Copy and Paste it into your design. Set the blending mode to Screen and the opacity to 23. Adjust until you're satisfied.

STEP 15 Select the Burn tool and paint over the edges to give it some shadow. In the Options bar, set the Range drop-down menu to Midtones and add some shade to corners. Think about basic shading when doing this.

STEP 16 Finally, select the Dodge tool. Set the Range drop-down menu to Highlights and add highlights in the eyes, cheeks, and certain corners to make them pop out a bit more. ■

PROFILE YEMAYEMA

Mercedes Crespo, better known as YemaYema, was born in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Now 27, she has been drawing since she was 15, though she wasn't sure of her artistic direction until a few years ago, when she discovered a book from the Berlin-based Pictoplasma Project. Since then, she has loved drawing even more and continues to develop her own style, hoping it evolves into something even more distinctive. T-shirts and other items bearing her artwork can be bought from her website.

CONTACT

- *yemayema.com*

The image immediately above was Mercedes' entry for Outsmart 2010, a project to create artwork featuring Smart cars. The other two images are her designs for T-shirts made by employees (empleos.com).

Sant 2010, Illustration for The Pixar Times
the Toy Story guys," Sascha admits.

› LEARN COLLABORATIVE SKILLS

To **Haiti** with love

Learn how 12 artists from the **Blood Sweat Vector** collective came together to design art in aid of earthquake victims

It's essential to be able to work in teams, so we're often told, but how do you do it well when your collaborators are scattered across the globe? The Renmen Project (*therenmenproject.co.uk*) makes a heartwarming case study. It was set up by Ben The Illustrator and design blog collective Thunder Chunky following the earthquake that devastated Haiti in January 2010. Their fundraising project continues to roll a year on, with the release of a series of type-art prints benefiting Unicef's Haiti appeal.

Thunder Chunky's Stephen Chan is also a member of the international Blood Sweat Vector collective. After discussions with BSV's Jared Nickerson (aka J3Concepts) and Kate McInnes (loungekat), they came up with the idea of doing artistic prints of the letters in 'Renmen' – the Haitian word for 'love' – with two artists jointly creating each letter. "We thought it would allow flexibility in the collaborations between each pair," says Stephen, "and it would strengthen the message behind Renmen."

The pairings fell into place quite naturally. "Out of common sense, some geographic positioning and timing, we all gathered to create the most awesome collaborative project ever," says Stephen, modestly.

Being fans of each other's work brought Chris Leavens and Alexandra Zutto (aka Zutto) together for the letter R (*above right*). Geographical proximity helped Australians Travis Price and Okayboss create the second N, while in France Guillaume Pain (Tougui) and Hosmane Benahmed (IKS) hatched the second E.

As for the first E, Kate bent the rules a tad by working on it with Sean Kelly, her partner in the illustration duo McKelly – and not a BSV member. Jared and Ruben Cantuni (aka TokyoCandies), who devised the first N, were already good friends. Finally, Stephen partnered up with Junichi Tsuneoka (aka Stubborn Sideburn) in what he calls a "superhuman Asian illustration entity" to do the M.

Engaging 12 illustrators with wildly contrasting styles could have resulted in a disconnected set of artworks, but Stephen wanted harmony. He wrote a simple brief explaining the positive messages that The Renmen Project wanted to evoke. He also sent round a template to provide guidance on the letters' dimensions and shape, plus a primary and secondary colour swatch.

Of the letter he co-designed, Stephen says: "I wanted it to happen organically, to inspire and excite," he says. "I explained my intentions, adding some illustrations to the letter template and passing it on [to Junichi]. We discussed our ideas each time the piece was exchanged, so that it grew the way we both wanted it to. Our angled, character-driven styles slotted together naturally, and we ended up with a creation that we're both very proud of."

This tutorial gives a glimpse of that collaborative process through the work of Chris and Zutto. They bounced an Illustrator file between their respective homes in California and Miass, Russia, until they felt their letter was complete.

Stephen feels the project was a way for him to use his skills to make a difference. "This is why I really like being an illustrator," he says. "Illustrators are truly the nicest people, and without their help none of this could have happened. Hopefully we can sell everything and donate 100 per cent of the proceeds to Haiti."

> "Illustrators are truly the nicest people, and without their help none of this could have happened"

Stephens awesome cover for the new Publishers Club magazine *Totummy*.

PROFILE STEPHEN CHAN

› Based in Liverpool, Stephen describes his design style this way: "It's character-driven and often involves isometric detailed landscapes and scenes. I try to implement as much detail and make the illustration as fun as possible."

CONTACT
• *stephen-chan.co.uk*

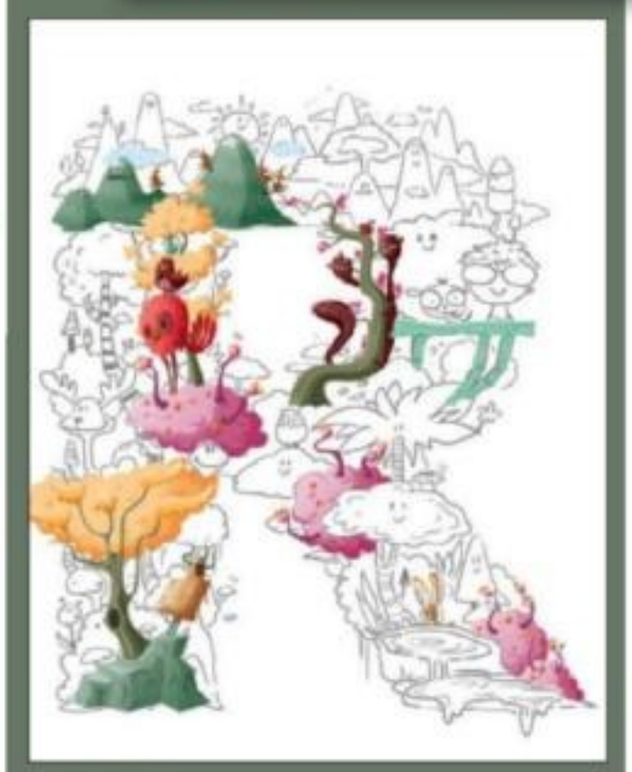
› INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
• "That's a bit of a mystery as we put this together over the course of months," says Chris.

SOFTWARE
• Adobe Illustrator

STEP 01 Zutto kicked off the collaboration with Chris by doing a preparatory sketch of the R. Her aim was to remix the most fun ideas, characters and landscape elements from her sketchbooks into one piece. Her main inspiration was that 'renmen' means 'love' in Haitian Creole.

That initial sketch turned out to be the most complicated part of the project for Zutto, because she constantly had to bear in mind how the ingredients she was introducing might best fit in with Chris's style.



STEP 02 Upon receiving the sketch, Chris felt it was "filled with lovely Zutto creatures and landscape elements". He began vectoring in his contribution, intertwining his characters with hers. "I loved that she chose an outdoor scenario because most of my artwork is heavily nature-inspired," he says. ›

WORKING IN HARMONY

› When working collaboratively, you have to be open to the other artists' ideas. If there's contention or a clash, it's going to show in the result. Also, the artwork may acquire a momentum of its own, transcending any ideas exchanged verbally. Despite something of a language barrier, Zutto and Chris were easily able to make headway with their shared work.

STEP 03 When Zutto received that first coloured version from Chris, containing his creatures and landscape elements, it gave her a lot of ideas on how she might develop the work. First, though, she wanted to get the broad strokes of colour down. "I filled all of the large shapes, such as trees, rocks, hills, clouds and main characters, to get a vision of whole composition in colour," she says. "Then I sent the result back to Chris."

PROFILE ZUTTO

› The imaginative worlds Alexandra Zutto creates are full of fluid, brightly coloured shapes, strange creatures, meandering rivers, dark woods and mountain slopes – the inspiration she draws from nature is clear to see.

CONTACT

• *zuttoworld.com*

Above *Forest Friends* – "Never know what can be inside your pockets", Zutto says cryptically.

› To help tie their respective contributions together, Chris chose to rework a couple of elements from Zutto's first rough – such as the wooden fence and the rabbit on the right – in his own style.

STEP 04 Chris added in more elements, keeping the forms flat and simple. "That's my approach to vector art – start with basic forms and add in the details later," he says.

STEP 05 The next step for Zutto was to start smoothing out the differences between her and Chris' styles, and to add some more details.

"I started from the bottom-right rock with two lakes," she says. "I spent much time choosing different colour combinations for all my large elements. The colours of the big shapes are really important for overall look."

STEP 06 As well as having a consistent colour scheme and style, having a coherent tone is also important in a collaboration (unless you're specifically after a visual clash). Chris noticed that Zutto's characters looked much cheerier than his assortment of quirky critters – such as the birds on the left, the two-legged cyclops yak in the lower-left, and the stern-looking squirrel beasts climbing the tree on the right. To contribute to the happy feel, he added in an elephantine "triclops" in the centre. "The Renmen charity is all about positivity, and I wanted to make sure that was conveyed in my part of th art," he says.

STEP 08 Chris' final contribution was to add in gradients, detail, shading and texture. Additionally, to balance the composition he resized and repositioned a few elements. He says he made sure "not to obscure the mighty Zutto's excellent artwork. It was a real joy working with her and letting the artwork do all the talking".

› "When I got the final file from Chris, it looked so exciting," says Zutto. "I especially love the squirrels."

STEP 07 The artwork was becoming overbusy, and Zutto felt that some objects needed shifting and that "we had a bit of mess with layering". After some tidying, she added little details to the jungle, such as birds, flies, bugs, mushrooms and clouds.

STEP 09 The trickiest thing was not to overload the composition and drown out what Chris had created. Zutto finalised her shading and texturing, and then she made herself stop. ■

PROFILE CHRIS LEAVENS

› Chris creates story-rich artwork, his surreal landscapes filled with bizarre monsters and fantastical characters. His work has appeared not just in print but also in computer games, TV shows and feature films.

CONTACT

- *chrisleavens.com*

Above top *Dudleyas*, a Californian plant. **Above centre** *Mandrake* – "slow growing but mighty" is Chris's description. **Above** *Oasis* – "the water-bearer begins another journey," Chris says.

Illustration for The Pixar Times

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Illustration for The Pixar Times

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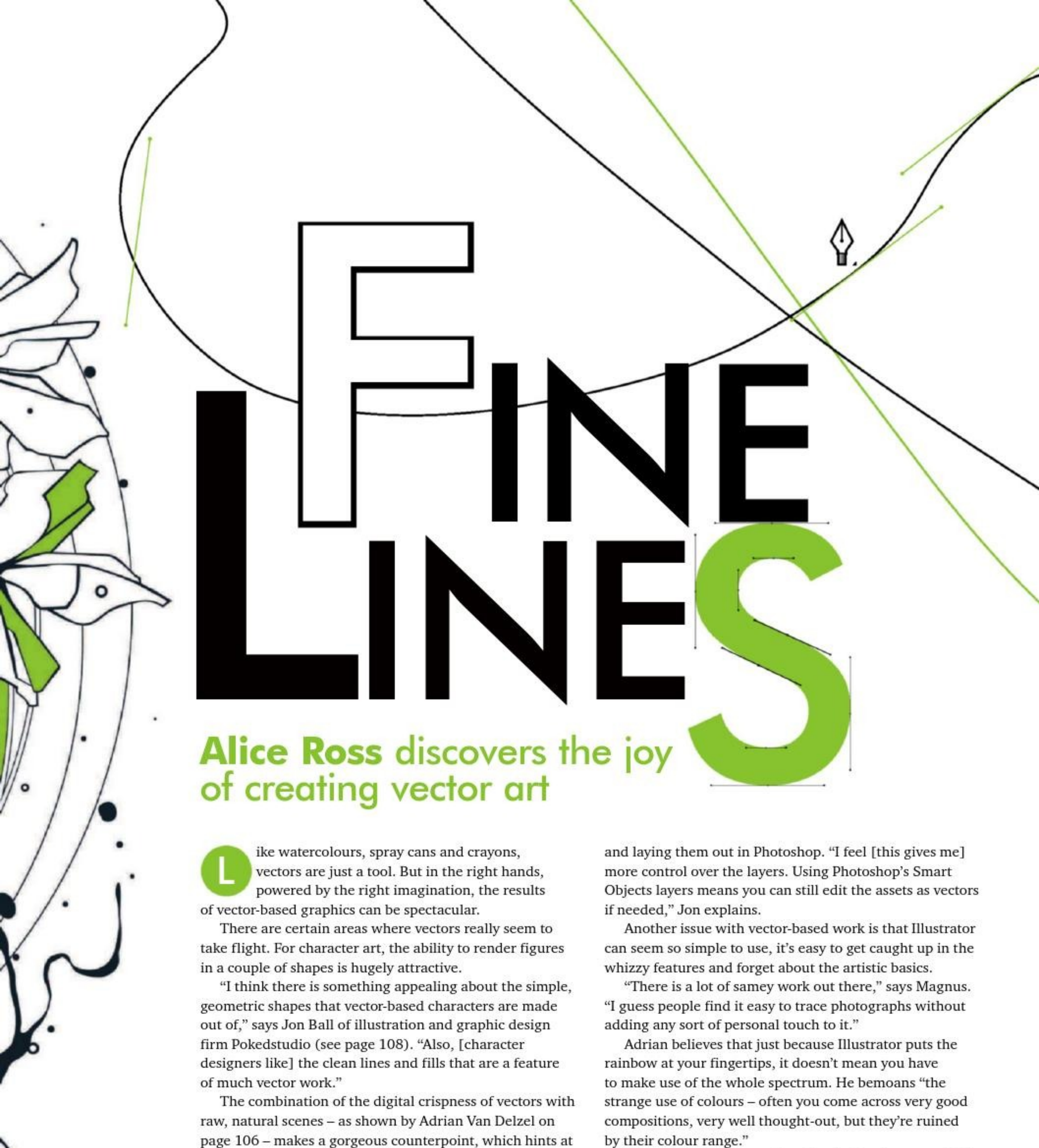
CHAPTER 5

VECTOR ART TECHNIQUES

GET THE BEST OUT OF ILLUSTRATOR

Ensonate, by Magnus Blomster – who says, sounding bewildered: "This could possibly have something to do with absinthe."



FINE LINES

Alice Ross discovers the joy of creating vector art

Like watercolours, spray cans and crayons, vectors are just a tool. But in the right hands, powered by the right imagination, the results of vector-based graphics can be spectacular.

There are certain areas where vectors really seem to take flight. For character art, the ability to render figures in a couple of shapes is hugely attractive.

"I think there is something appealing about the simple, geometric shapes that vector-based characters are made out of," says Jon Ball of illustration and graphic design firm Pokedstudio (see page 108). "Also, [character designers like] the clean lines and fills that are a feature of much vector work."

The combination of the digital crispness of vectors with raw, natural scenes – as shown by Adrian Van Delzel on page 106 – makes a gorgeous counterpoint, which hints at a sharper version of nature hiding inside your computer, like a 21st-century Narnia. Of his style of work, Adrian says: "I needed a medium that enables me to give expression and inspiration to thousands of details; the light forms and lines [of vector art] seemed very attractive for this."

Others, such as Magnus Blomster (see page 107), prefer a less obviously digital look, painstakingly recreating a hand-drawn style, Vector art has its pitfalls, though.

"Vectors can be very hard to work with in terms of layers and file size if you're working at 300dpi," explains Jon, "and it can get very fiddly grouping and selecting stuff within groups. Start adding in effects and the file soon starts to lag." He gets around this problem by taking vectors and laying them out in Photoshop. "I feel [this gives me] more control over the layers. Using Photoshop's Smart Objects layers means you can still edit the assets as vectors if needed," Jon explains.

Another issue with vector-based work is that Illustrator can seem so simple to use, it's easy to get caught up in the whizzy features and forget about the artistic basics.

"There is a lot of samey work out there," says Magnus. "I guess people find it easy to trace photographs without adding any sort of personal touch to it."

Adrian believes that just because Illustrator puts the rainbow at your fingertips, it doesn't mean you have to make use of the whole spectrum. He bemoans "the strange use of colours – often you come across very good compositions, very well thought-out, but they're ruined by their colour range."

Meanwhile, illustrator Gary Fernández (see page 109) argues that there's a more fundamental issue at hand, one that lies at the heart of the phrase 'digital art'. "I feel that digital is considered an end, rather than a means. In general, people tend to think about how to resolve an image in the least time possible, rather than thinking about how to obtain a better image. The result is an image that lacks soul and is crammed with effects."

Each of the artists we showcase here has gone beyond the boundaries of genre to create illustrations that, while they're made from vectors, are so much more than their means of creation. Perhaps the key is to master the tool – and only then, focus on the work.

Adrian Van Delzel

Animal magic

The enigmatic digital artworks of Barcelona-based artist Adrian Van Delzel are populated by strange creatures that only come out at night. Looking at his artwork is a little like spotting Bigfoot in *Fantasia* – the exotic beasts stand frozen and symmetrical in the middle of fantastically detailed psychedelic landscapes.

"My images always have a central theme, normally one that's related to nature and to hidden feelings," he explains. The mystery of his images is intentional: he describes them as an attempt to communicate complex feelings that are hard to express in words, as well as "tracings of melancholy and of our roots as animals."

Inspiration arrives in a complete form for Adrian. After sketching his creatures in pencil, "I never retouch or change them: they come out exactly as they are," he says. Adrian traces his scanned pencil sketches in Illustrator before digitally adding a landscape.

This apparent simplicity belies the immense detail that Adrian works in. "In many cases, the process takes me weeks," he says. "For example, [in *Secret Spirit*] each of those feathers is made up of four or five layers, overlaid with transparencies. I'm an obsessive."

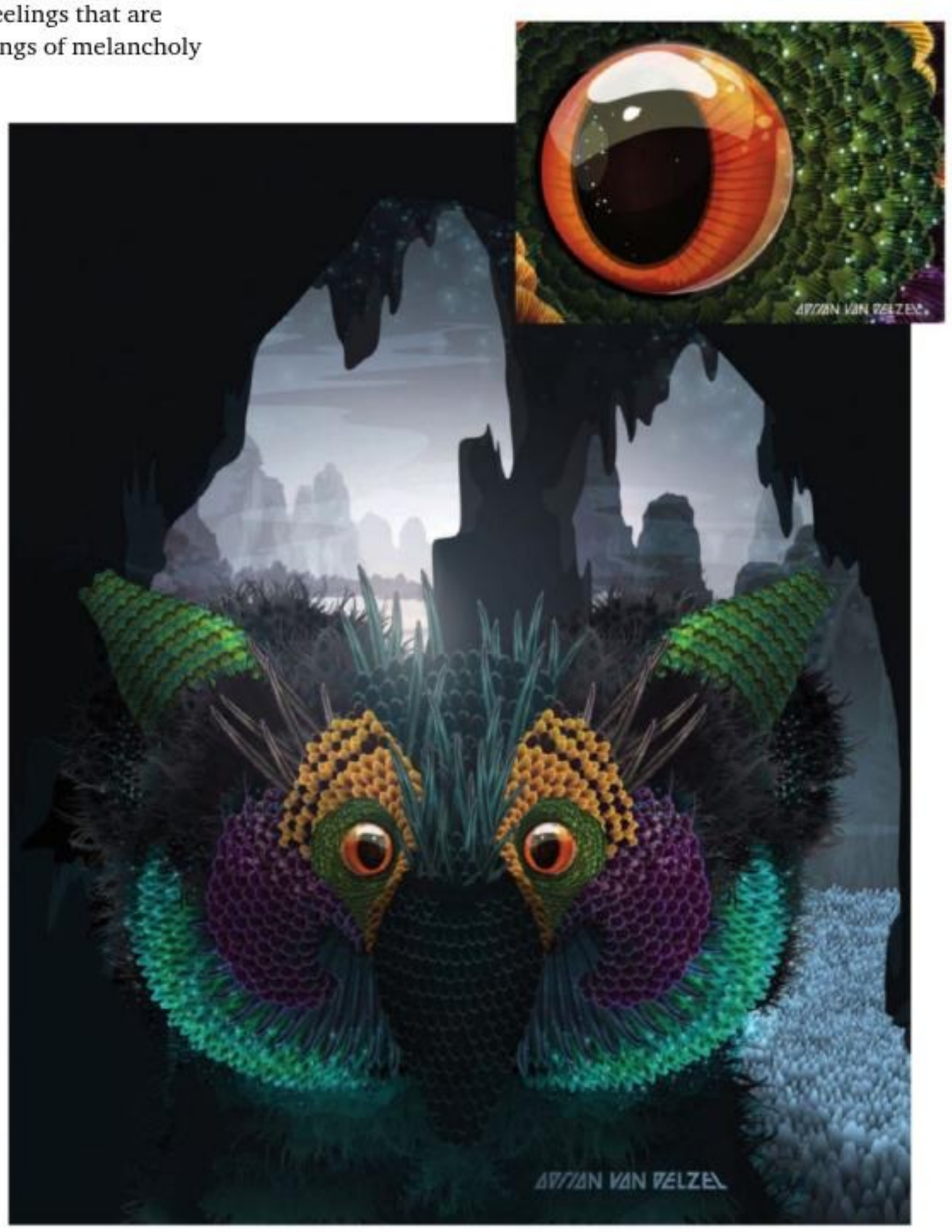
Finally, he creates the lighting effects. "They're little more than Clipping Masks and gradients, overlaid on the final composition," he says.

Adrian has long been impressed by vector art. "I remember seeing the work of other [vector] artists and being left speechless – it seemed unattainable." Having taught himself Illustrator, it's become his key tool. "I don't use any other programs – it seems like a betrayal," he explains. "If I start with vectors, I finish with them."

Adrian finds that there's an inherent minimalism to working with Illustrator. "Vectors limit me to showing only what needs to be shown," he says. "Without them, my art wouldn't be the same."

adrianvandelzel.com

Adrian is no stranger to gradients, but says they must be handled with care. "When badly used, they can create unattractive images," he says. *Secret Spirit* (**below**) exemplifies his obsession with detail. A sketch of part of it is shown **left**.



PRO *VECTOR TIP*

"FOR THOSE WHO ARE STARTING OUT: BE PATIENT. FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY MASTERED VECTORS: EXPERIMENT... A LOT. FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO START: BE AWARE THAT IT'S VERY TIME-CONSUMING."

– Adrian Van Delzel

Magnus Blomster
The ladies' man

A cover (**right**) for record label Ad Noiseam, who Magnus describes as one of his favourite clients.

Not all artists want their work to instantly seem digital. Magnus Blomster combines Illustrator with a hand-drawn style to make the image seem an implausibly perfect pen-and-ink drawing.

"My main reason for choosing vectors is that I am a perfectionist," he says. "If something goes wrong – no matter how insignificant – when I'm doing an ink drawing, I start over from scratch and thus very rarely finish any. I don't think it aids my style in any particular way since my style is what it is – but it has certainly increased the rate of finished images."

Magnus' often erotic images feature women surrounded by curlicues. He describes his style as a blend of Art Nouveau ("I have known and loved [it] since I was a little boy," he says) with religious symbolism, pornography and "general weirdness".

His work refuses to fit into illustration trends – possibly because he never set out to be a professional illustrator. "I've always drawn. The getting paid for doing it part just sort of happened by itself."

To create a piece, Magnus scans a pencil sketch, then painstakingly traces its lines as closed paths. "I always use the Pen tool with 0.1pt red lines on top of a sketch, to be able to see what I'm doing," he explains.

He selects everything on the layer, removes the lines and, in a separate layer, fills the shapes. "After that, still with everything selected, I bring up the Pathfinder and use the Unite tool, then hit Expand to make everything on the layer one single shape."

Finally, he adds layers for the background and face colours. He uses the Pen, Ellipse and Pathfinder tools – "No other effect or filters or trickery. All lines are filled shapes."

The secret of Magnus' success is to work in immense detail while avoiding fancy tools. This approach keeps file sizes manageable, but it's also key to the way he views Illustrator: "more as a pen than a program," he says.

blomster.tumblr.com

PRO VECTOR TIP

"DON'T TREAT ILLUSTRATOR AS SOMETHING THAT'S GOING TO MAKE THE IMAGES FOR YOU"

– Magnus Blomster

For this personal work (sketch and rough **above**, final piece **right**), Magnus was aiming to create something less complicated than his usual style.

Pokedstudio
The right character

"I love to create slightly offbeat characters and weird worlds," says Jon Ball. In his professional guise as Pokedstudio, he has turned this love into a career, creating quirky yet highly polished miniature worlds for clients including MTV, the BBC, PlayStation, Doritos and Penguin Books.

Jon explains that vectors are a natural fit for the way he works – "I like using simple geometric shapes to create characters and worlds" – but it's not the only application he'll use. "I do about half my work in vectors, and half using 3D; most pieces tend to be a mix. I usually take works into Photoshop for some final editing," he adds.

To illustrate his creative process, Jon talked us through how he created his art print *Octobeast*. He says: "I started with a sketch – though I don't always. Often my sketches are very simple, just the main element and its relationship to the rest of the picture. I then create some simple shapes in Illustrator. The most complex shape in this picture was probably the eye."

He continues: "I used various gradient fills for the iris and for the lens. Using custom brushes I created some veins around the eyeball, and made some transparent layers for highlights."

Other elements were brought in on separate layers, then he exported the image into Photoshop to add in the creased-paper texture. "This could be done in Illustrator, but it starts to get really slow when you add large raster layers in," Jon says.

While the methods involved in creating images like this are surprisingly simple, Jon points out that the skills needed are anything but. "You could argue that these vector characters are simple to make and less time-consuming than a hand-drawn or 3D character, but having experience in most media I don't think that's true. You need a certain eye to get the proportions and shapes of vector characters right. Creating good and unique characters in Illustrator is just as hard as in any other media."

pokedstudio.com

There's no shortage of Pokedstudio's trademark "offbeat characters and weird worlds" in *Morning of Doom* (**top**), *Deadly Dog* (**above**) and *Octobeast* (**below**).

***PRO** VECTOR TIP*

"Most successful art is liked because of the meaning behind an image. So make art that has some reason to exist"

– Jon Ball

Gary Fernández
Mr Clean

PRO VECTOR TIP

"FIND YOUR OWN WAY OF USING THE TOOLS, TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING THAT'S TRULY YOUR OWN"

– Gary Fernández

Stylised and elegant, with a muted – almost sombre – colour palette, Gary Fernández's images are digital art at its sharpest. The Spaniard moved from graphic design in fashion magazines into illustration, providing imagery for high-profile ad campaigns and showing his work in exhibitions worldwide.

This sharpness is what draws him to vectors. "I like the cleanness of line," he says. His figures are often set against blank backdrops, but they're usually surrounded by very detailed elements.

Vectors have another advantage. "I like the ability to work on details to the maximum [size], which is only possible with vectors," he says.

The same principle works at the other end of the scale: vectors can be scaled infinitely. For artists like Gary, whose illustrations sometimes appear on billboards, that's a big relief.

This method also makes it easy to experiment, allowing Gary to play with colours and placement of elements. However, as with all the artists we spoke to, his creativity doesn't begin on a screen.

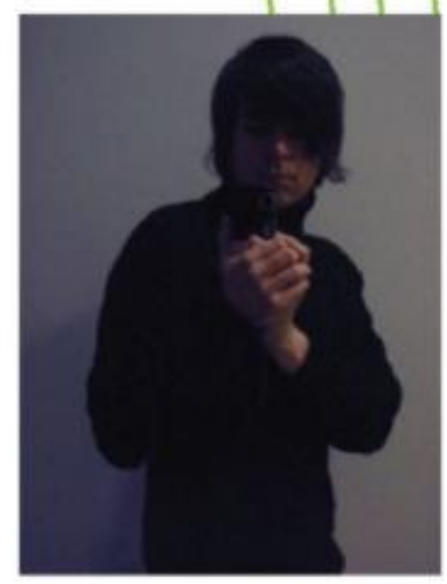
"My first stage is with pencil and paper," he explains. "Then I work up each of the elements until I achieve a detail and a form that I like.

"Then comes the vector stage, which is when I trace all the drawings, develop the composition and the details," he says, explaining that he works on each element individually before arranging them in the final composition. Next he adds colour, limiting his palette to the bare minimum.

"The final stage is Photoshop, where I polish imperfection and give the final touches," he says.

It's a simple but detailed process – in terms of Illustrator tools Gary uses little more than "Knife, Scissors, Eraser and above all Cmd + Z." His results are slick but what shines through most is the imagination, hovering in a circus-like space somewhere between Disney and Dalí.

garyfernandez.net



Below, far right A series of festive images Gary produced last year for the Globus department store in Switzerland.
Right Gary usually starts his work with a pencil sketch.

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 45 minutes

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS5

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> **LEARN** VECTOR LIGHTING EFFECTS

Faux 3D finishes in Illustrator

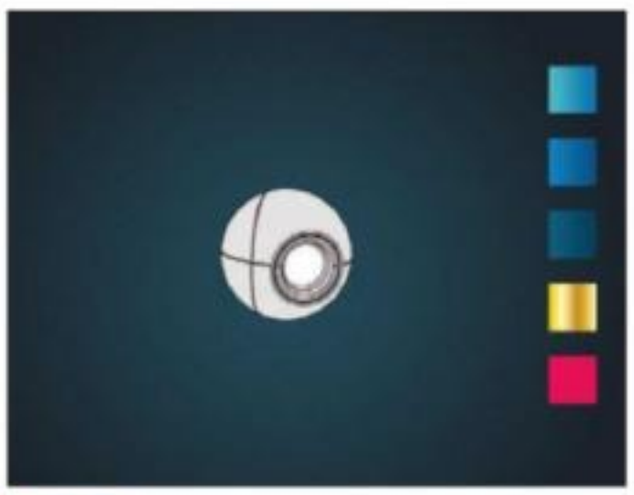
Create vibrant 3D illustrations using a few simple effects

Karan Singh shows you a clever and ridiculously quick way of giving your flat illustrations a faux 3D finish – without leaving the confines of Illustrator.

Karan finds Photoshop's 3D lighting tools to be cumbersome, and says that Illustrator is more than capable of creating depth and dimension, using such effects as the inner and outer glows and the Gaussian blur.

Here, he focuses on one element of the artwork, but the techniques were used throughout.

STEP 01 First off, grab the greyscale droid (*TUTDROID.AI*) I've created from the project files, and open it up in Illustrator. You're more than welcome to create your own object and use this tutorial as a guide to colouring and lighting. The beauty of this technique is that it's applicable to almost any shape.



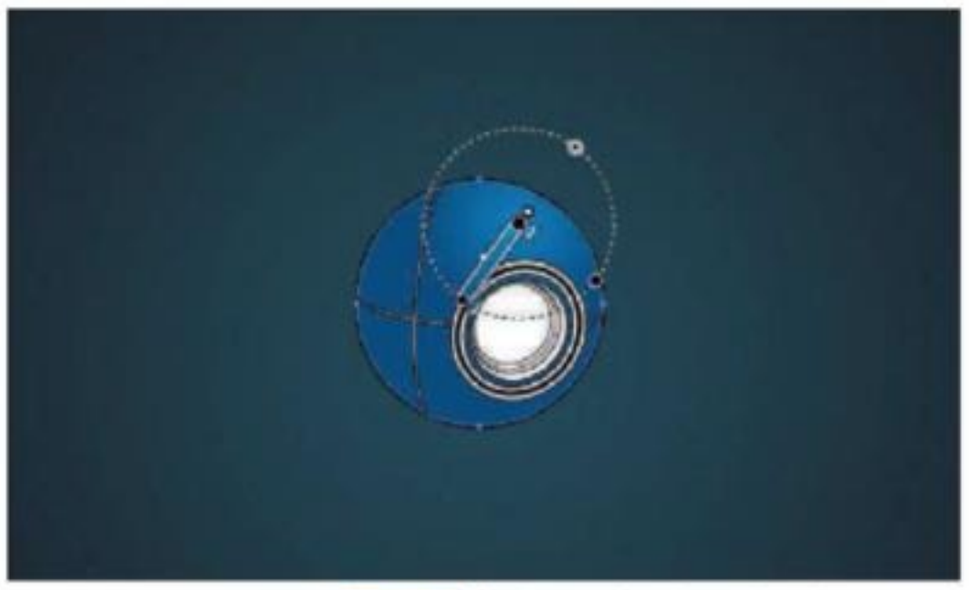
STEP 02 We're going to use a set of gradient swatches to colour the shape. For this tutorial, I've already created a set of rich blue swatches, which you will find on the 'Palette' layer of *TUT-DROID.AI*.

If blue isn't your thing – or you're using your own image for this tutorial – create dark, mid and light versions of your chosen hue.

STEP 03 What I've found crucial in helping define how to colour a shape is the creation of a light source. Setting this up is as simple as drawing a circle on the canvas to distinguish where the light is coming from.

A guide like this comes in handy when your illustration becomes more complex and confusing as you lose count of the shapes and gradients used.

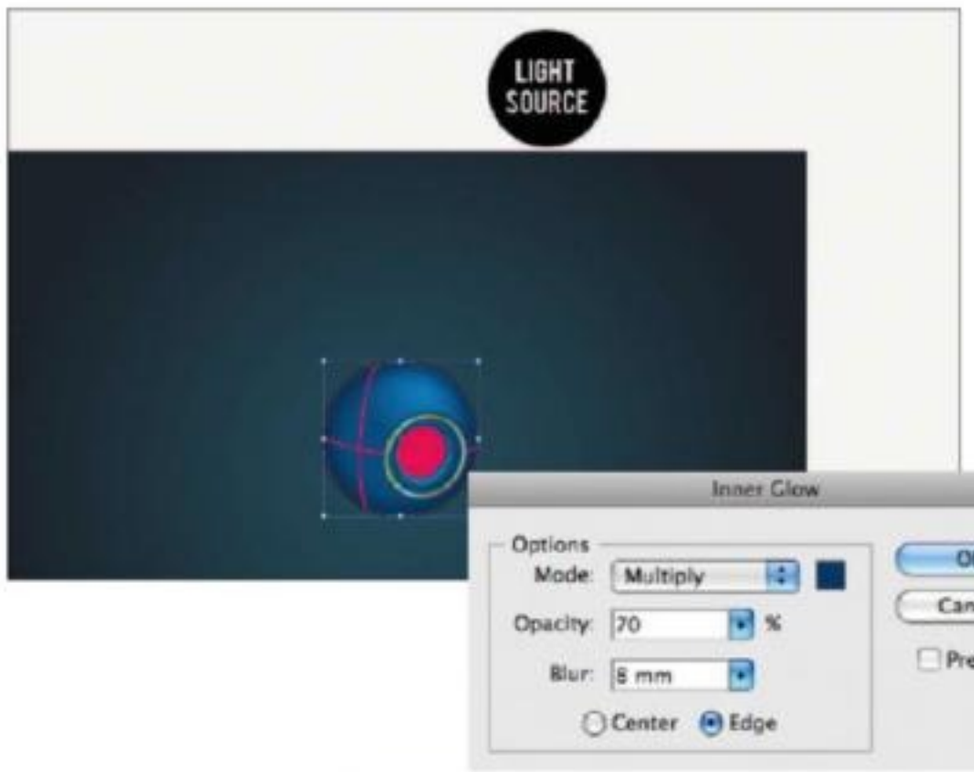
Create this object on a separate layer and lock it.



STEP 04 Let's go back to the shape. Using the light source as a reference, begin colouring the droid. Start with the base as this helps define how the others are coloured.

Using the Gradient tool (**G**) with the Shape option selected, click and drag on the shape to define the gradation of the gradient. I've used the lightest gradient for the base and set it to 'Radial' in the Gradient palette (**Window > Gradient**).

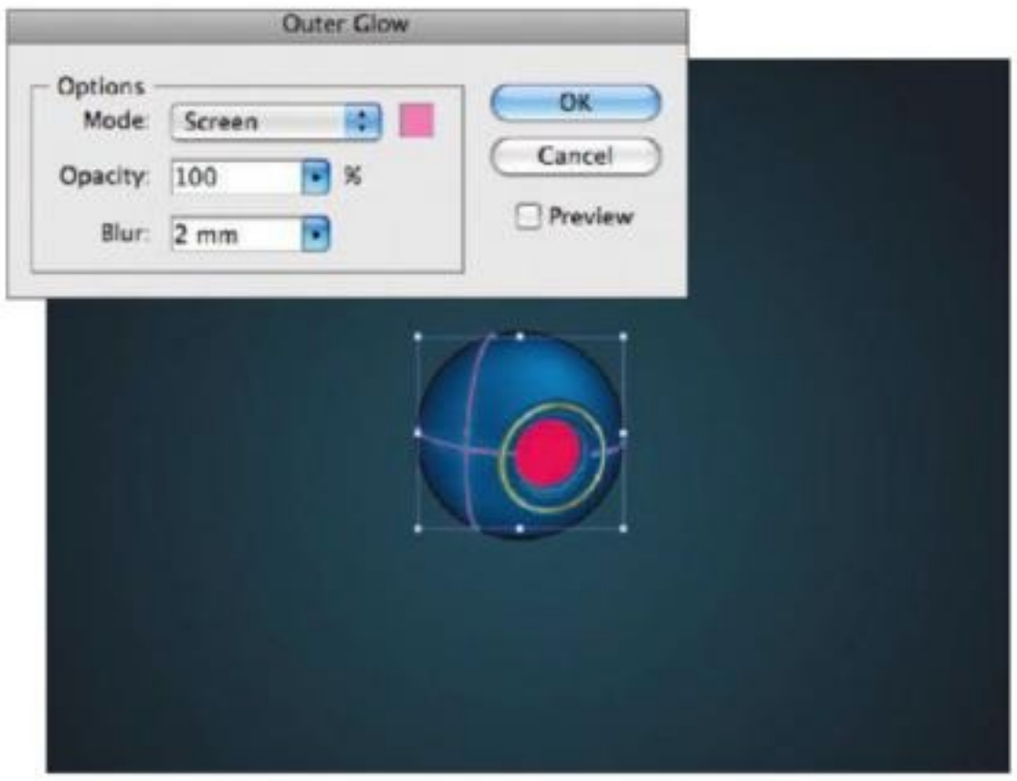
Ensure that the lighter shade of the gradient corresponds to the position of the light source. In this case, the lighter colour in the gradient begins at the top as the light source is above the droid.



STEP 05 The second step to adding depth to the shape is giving the base of the droid an inner glow. An inner glow is useful as, regardless of the angles of the gradient, it creates a shadow that follows the edge of the shape, giving it a bevelled appearance.

With the base shape of the droid selected, chose **Effects > Stylize > Inner Glow**. Select the 'Edge' option, a shadow colour and a blur amount. If you're using my droid and colour scheme, select #123860 as the colour with a Blur of 8mm.

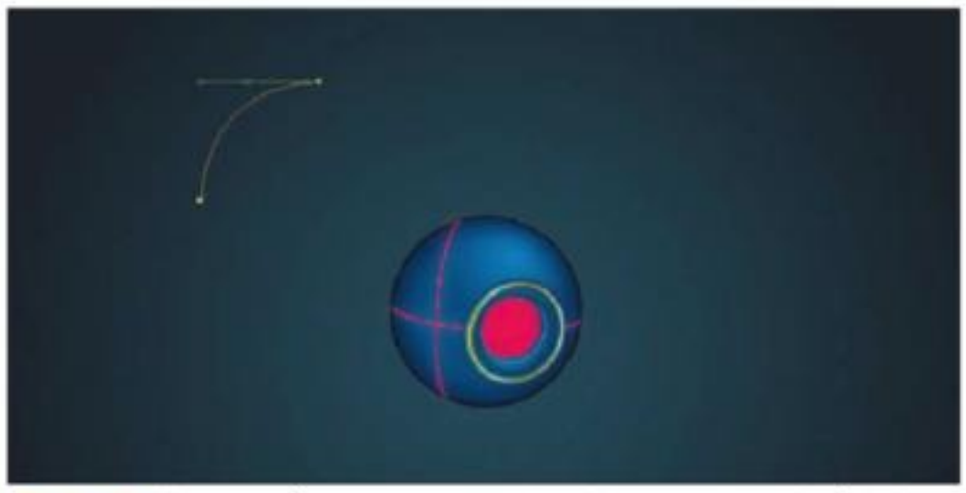
Choose Multiply for the blending mode. Set the opacity to 70% for a rich, dark shadow. As shapes vary, so does the level of blur applied; the smaller the shape, the less the amount of blur.



06 Applying an outer glow is achieved using a similar process to the previous stage, except it obviously occurs outside of the shape, using Outer Glow.

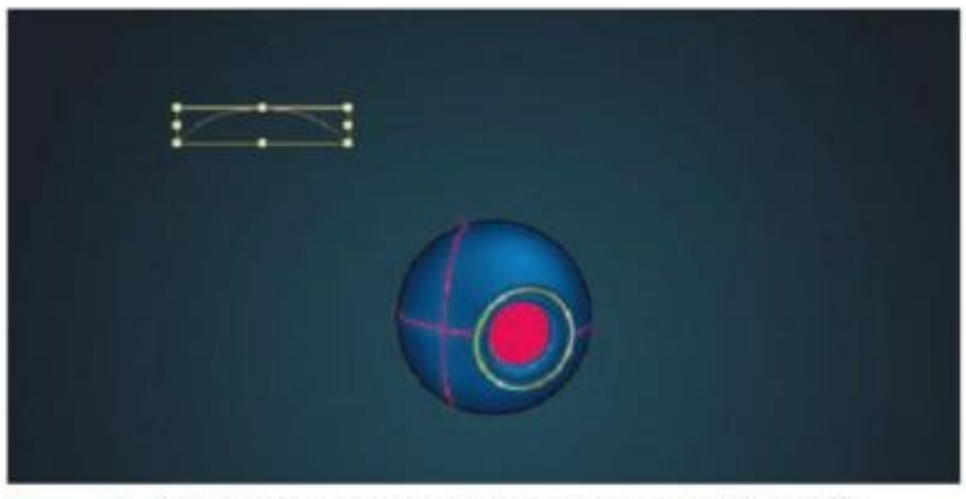
Personally, I like to use this tool sparingly as it allows you to accentuate certain features of an object, without looking like everything's glowing. For example, here I want to give the impression that the pink elements in the droid are glowing.

To do this, select the shape, then choose **Effects > Stylize > Outer Glow**. As with the Inner Glow options, adjust the blending mode, blur and opacity. Leave the blending mode as Screen, as this is ideal for objects on darker backgrounds, with 100% opacity for maximum glow and a 2mm Blur. I used a light pink for the glow colour (#FF92BC).



07 The next few steps are pivotal in creating the final effects. We're going to create a custom brush that tapers, widens and then tapers again. This brush is going to be used for highlights and shadows

Create a new layer. Select the Arc tool, which is on the Toolbar under the Line Segment tool. When selected, hold **Shift** while you drag the tool across to create an equally proportional arc.

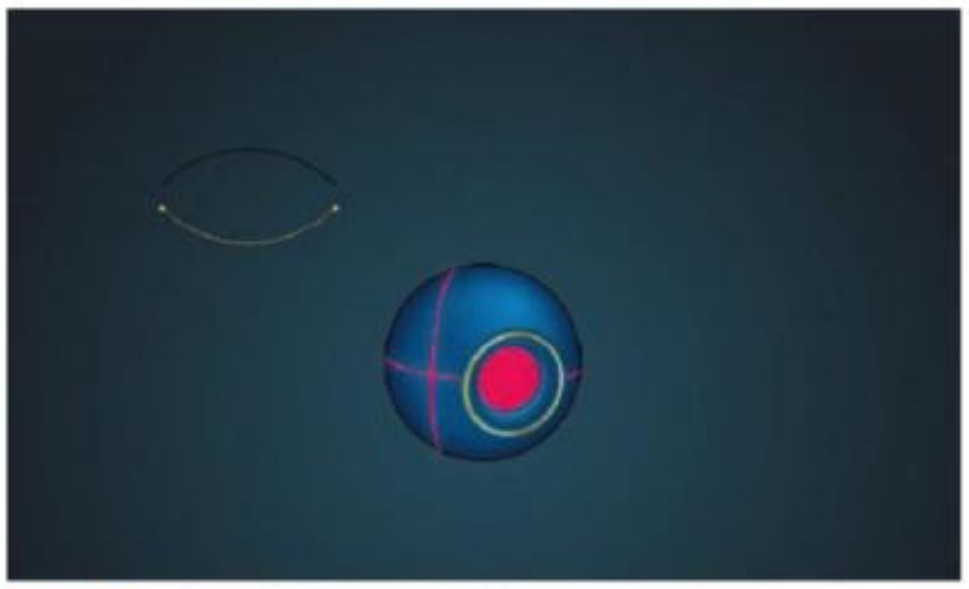


08 Select your newly created arc and rotate it 45° clockwise (**Object > Transform > Rotate -45°**), until it's horizontal with the ends facing down. You should now be seeing half of your tapered brush stroke.

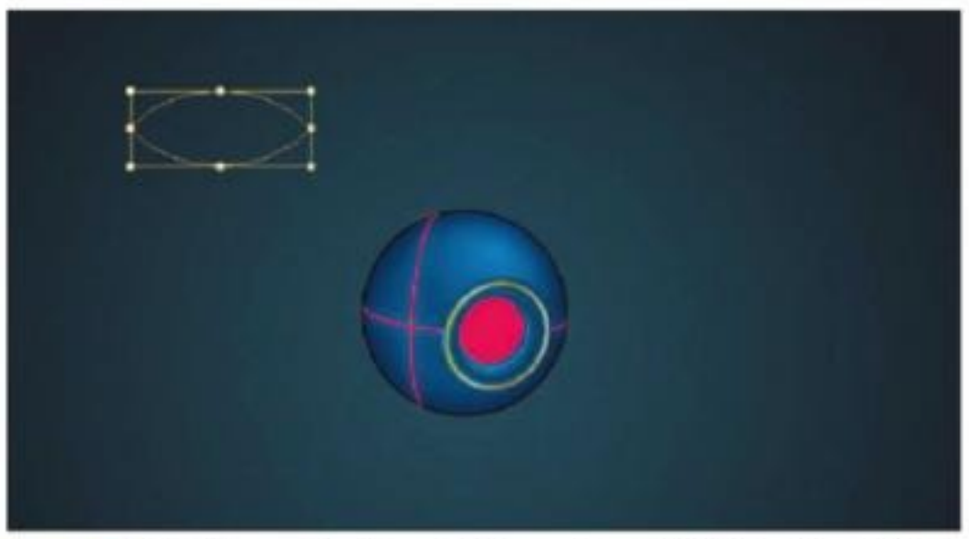
We need to mirror this line, in order to make a shape out of it. To do this, first **right-click** and select **Transform > Reset Bounding Box**.

DITCH YOUR STOCK BRUSHES

The key to this tutorial is using the tapered brushes. Using the stock brushes doesn't suffice as when the strokes are blurred, they don't taper off. As a result, I find custom brushes give things a more authentic effect.



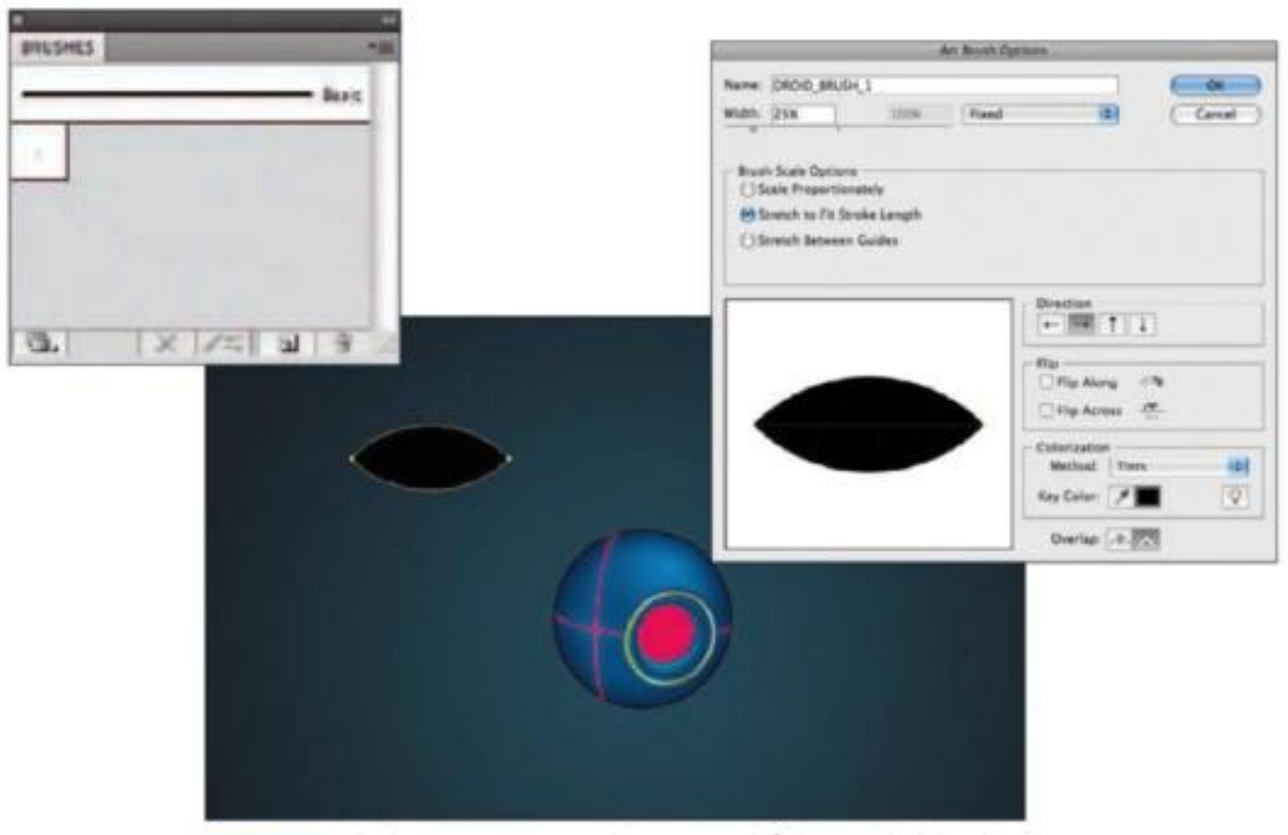
09 Select the line and hold **Alt**, whilst dragging it to create a duplicate. With the duplicate selected, choose **Object > Transform > Rotate** and set the value to 180°. Click OK, and your result should be a mirrored version of the arc.



10 For the next step, switch on Smart Guides (**Cmd/Ctrl + U**), and move the duplicated arc to match up with the ends of the original arc. The best way to do this in Selection tool mode (**V**) is by dragging the arc by either of its end anchor points, and lining it up to the corresponding end of the other arc.

After lining up the anchor points correctly, your cursor will change from black to white.

Select both the arcs, **right-click** and choose Join. This joins the anchor points. The two arcs are now a shape.

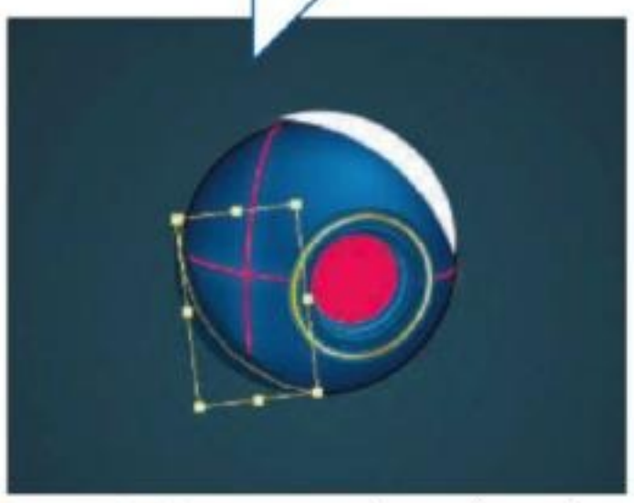


11 Select your new shape and fill it with black. Open the brush palette, if necessary (**Window > Brushes** or **F5**), and select New Brush (the button to the left of the trashcan). From the types that follow, choose Art Brush.

In the Art Brush Options dialog that opens, set the brush width to 25% and the Colourisation value to Tints. Hit OK.

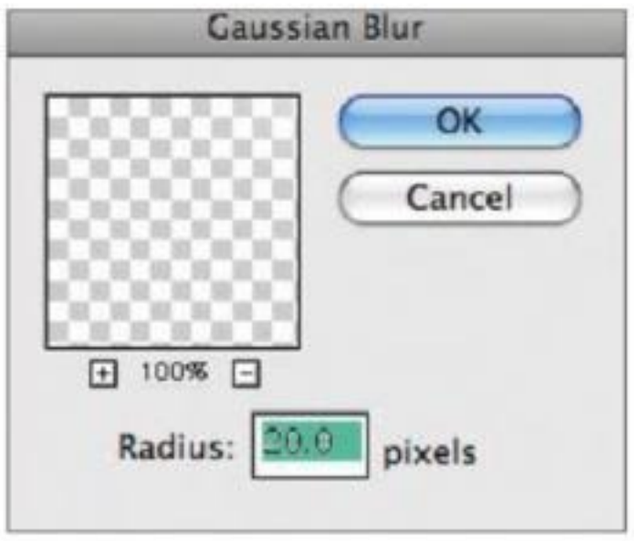
We've finished making our highlights and shadows brush, so you can delete the merged arc shape from the canvas.

"Use your newly created brush... The locations of the highlights and shadows are defined by the direction of your light source"



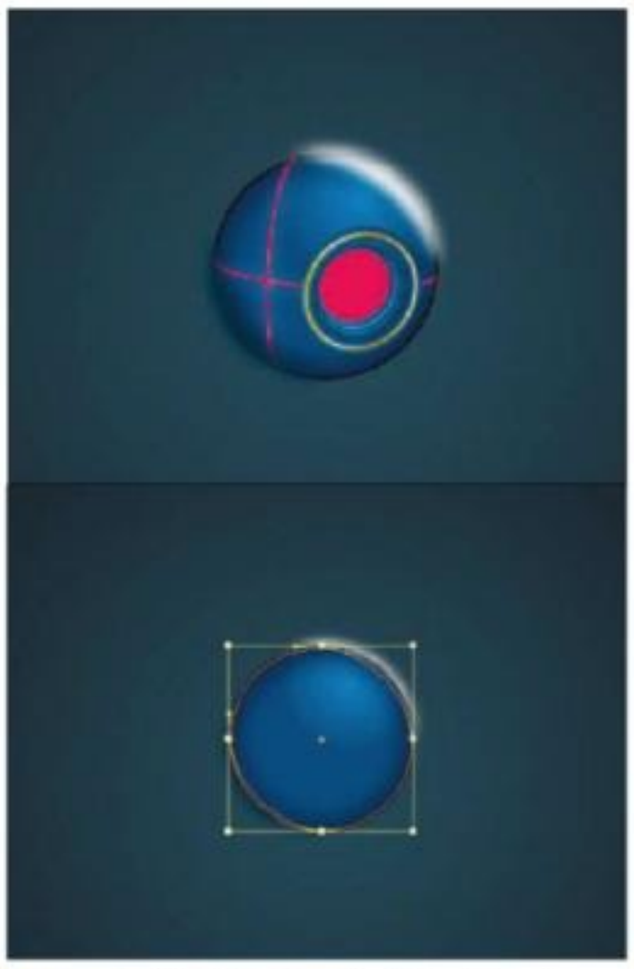
STEP 12 Create a new layer above the droid and call it 'Effects'. Use your newly created brush to create a 3-pixel highlight stroke in white (#FFFFFF) in the top left edge of the shape, then a 3-pixel shadow stroke in dark blue (#022E44) in the bottom-right edge of the shape.

The locations of the highlights and shadows are defined by the direction of your light source.



STEP 13 Blur the highlight and shadow strokes by selecting one stroke. From the top menu, choose **Effects > Blur > Gaussian Blur**.

As with the inner and outer glows, the blur radius is usually relative to the site of the object. In this case, I chose a 20-pixel radius. The larger the radius, the softer the colour. Repeat the same process for the shadow stroke.



STEP 14 You'll notice that the blur is bleeding past the surface area of the droid. Our next step is to create a clipping mask to rectify this. Group the highlight and shadow strokes by selecting both of them, and then **Cmd/Ctrl + G**.

From the droid layer, select the base of the shape, copy it (**Cmd/Ctrl +C**) and paste it in place (**Cmd/Ctrl + F**) in the 'Effects' layer.

STEP 15 Now the droid's base should be on top of the blurred strokes. Select both the base of the droid you've just pasted and the grouped strokes, then **Object > Clipping Mask > Make** (or **Cmd/Ctrl + 7**). Strokes bleeding outside of the shape are now contained within the droid's outline.

STEP 16 Out of personal preference, I added some additional blurred shapes to the droid's pink eye. These were created in the same way as the strokes, but with filled-in shapes. ■

PROFILE KARAN SINGH

Karan Singh is an freelance illustrator based in Melbourne, Australia. He's had over four years experience working in a studio and independently on projects, ranging from typography to apparel design to illustration.

When he's not illustrating he's writing for his self-initiated design blog, Pig Bimpin'. Drop him an email at *karan@wakeupmrsingh.com*

CONTACT

- *wakeupmrsingh.com*

Above top ***K4000, a self-initiated*** personal work for Depthcore's *Mirror* exhibition. It was inspired by retro futurism, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and the work of Syd Mead

Above *R is for Replicant* Inspired by Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. It was created with Model Apostolesei.

„One of my favourite

Illustration for The Pixar Times

the Toy Story guys," Sascha admits.

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> LEARN DYNAMIC ILLUSTRATOR

Create lush, **glossy vector** images

Discover how Illustrator's Gaussian Blur can transform your art

Ot's easy to associate vectors with flat shapes – but creating Illustrator images with real depth needn't be a headache. In this tutorial, Thomas Burden (who works under the name ...There Will Be Unicorns) shows how you can create striking, vibrant work in Illustrator using a simple colour palette and basic blur effects – particularly Illustrator's built-in Gaussian Blur effects.

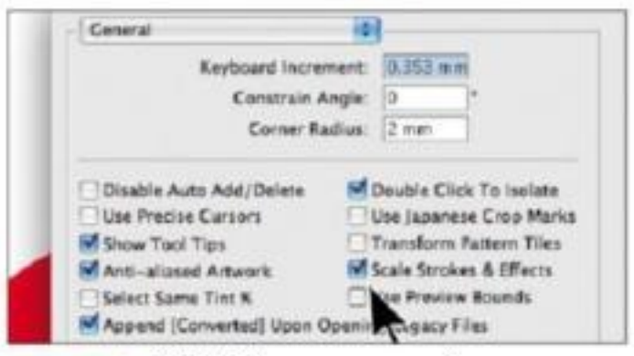
Along the way, you'll also learn how to bring simple shapes to life, and how to create charming characters and elements, using only basic Illustrator and Photoshop.

Shading elements in Illustrator with the Gaussian Blur leaves your objects completely editable. Once you've scaled these elements to the right size, you can import them into Photoshop for a quick brightening up and some tweaks to layer blending modes and styles.

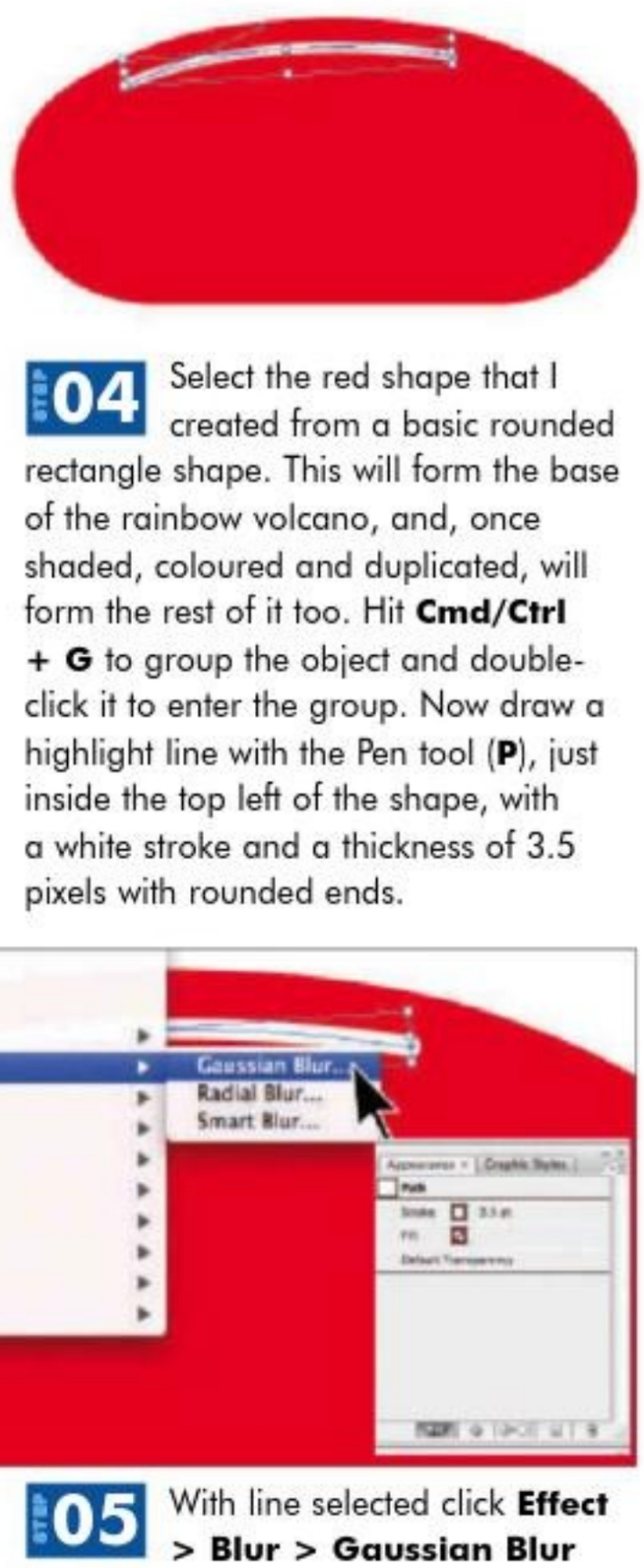
The net effect is fresh, clean and irresistibly cheerful.

STEP 01 It's a good idea to start by sketching on paper: I find it easier and quicker to mark out rough compositions and characters or elements by hand first. These are very rough, though, and I don't even bother scanning them in, preferring to take snapshots with a digital camera for speed. Scan yours in if you prefer.

STEP 02 Loosely trace these jottings in Illustrator, using the basic Shape tools in combination with the Pen tool to keep a uniform and simple look to all the elements. Then choose a colour palette – keep this as simple as possible. I usually use no more than 10 colours. Use these as a base to work with while getting the major compositional elements in place.



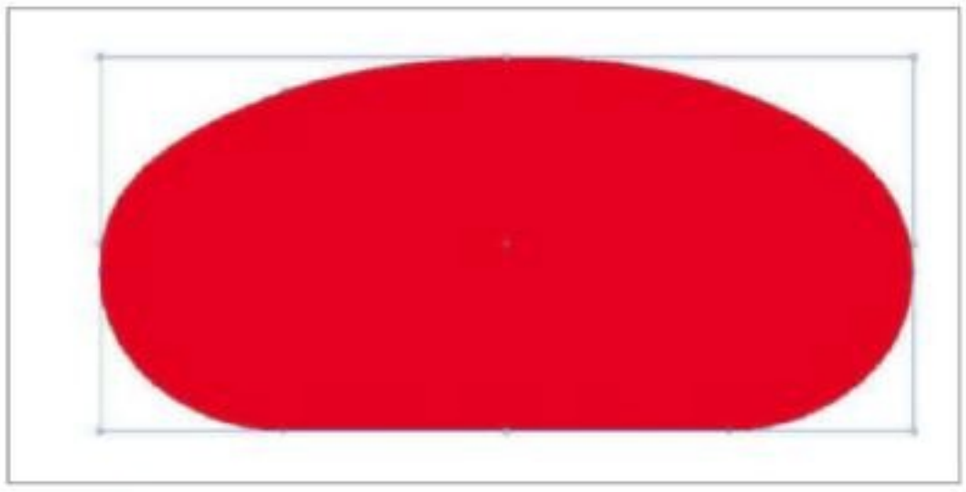
STEP 03 We'll focus on creating one element, as almost everything is created using the same process. Open *Rainbow Volcano.ai* from the project files in Illustrator. Then select **Illustrator > Preferences > General**. Tick the box marked Scale Strokes & Effects. This ensures that any stroke and effect applied to an object will scale relatively to the object it is applied to – which is key here, as adding strokes and effects is the bulk of what we'll be doing.



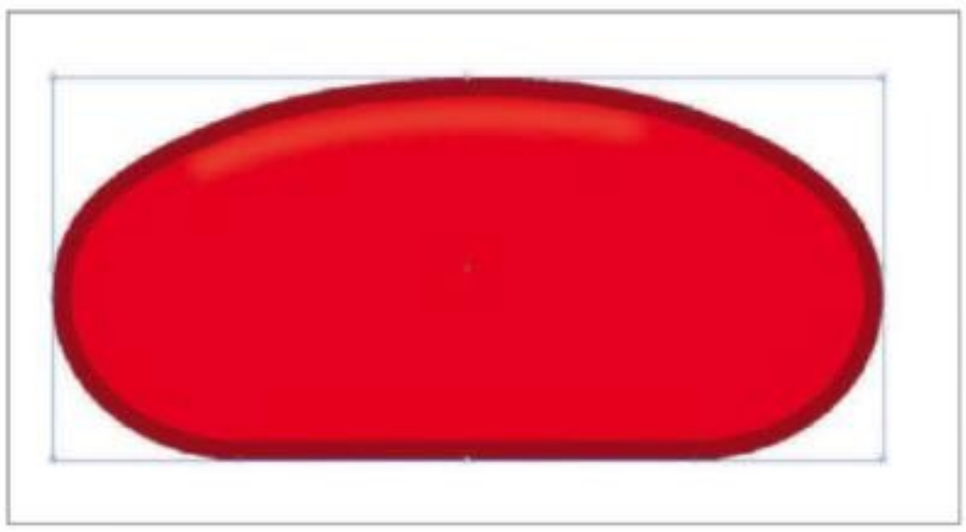
STEP 04 Select the red shape that I created from a basic rounded rectangle shape. This will form the base of the rainbow volcano, and, once shaded, coloured and duplicated, will form the rest of it too. Hit **Cmd/Ctrl + G** to group the object and double-click it to enter the group. Now draw a highlight line with the Pen tool (**P**), just inside the top left of the shape, with a white stroke and a thickness of 3.5 pixels with rounded ends.

STEP 05 With line selected click **Effect > Blur > Gaussian Blur** and set it to 10. You will see the effect appear in the Appearances panel on the right. If this is not open then select **Window > Appearance** from the menu or use **Shift + F6**. Double-click the effect in the appearances panel at any time to edit it.

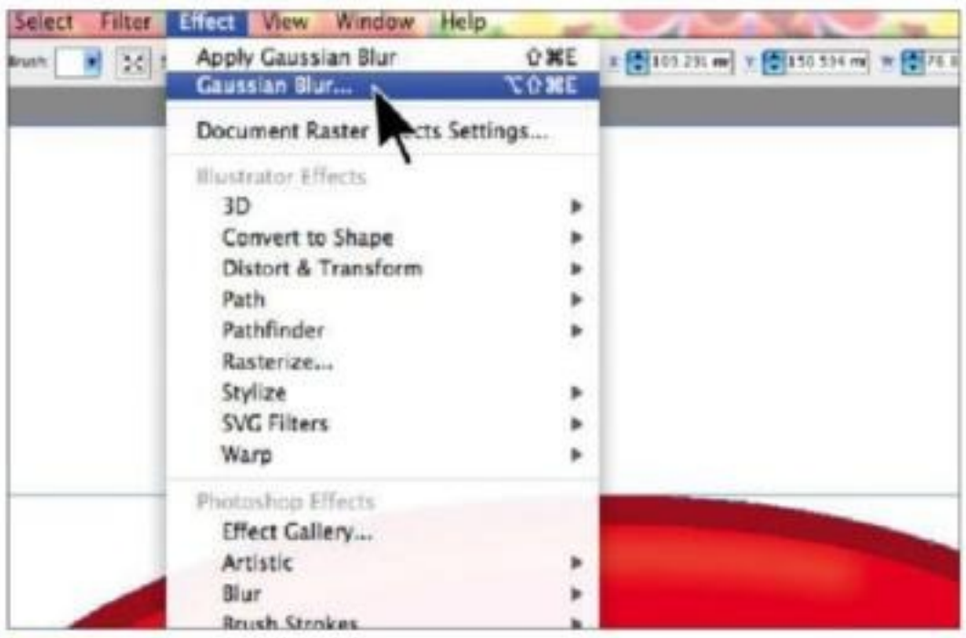
STEP 06 Now reduce the opacity of the line to 29%. There you have it – a highlight.



STEP 07 Now we need to mask the group so that any shading we apply stays within the borders of the shape. Select the background shape again and go **Cmd/Ctrl + C > Cmd/Ctrl + F > Cmd/Ctrl + Shift +]** to copy it and paste in the same place, then bring the copy to the front. Click the Make/Release Clipping Mask button in the bottom left of the Layers palette to mask the group.

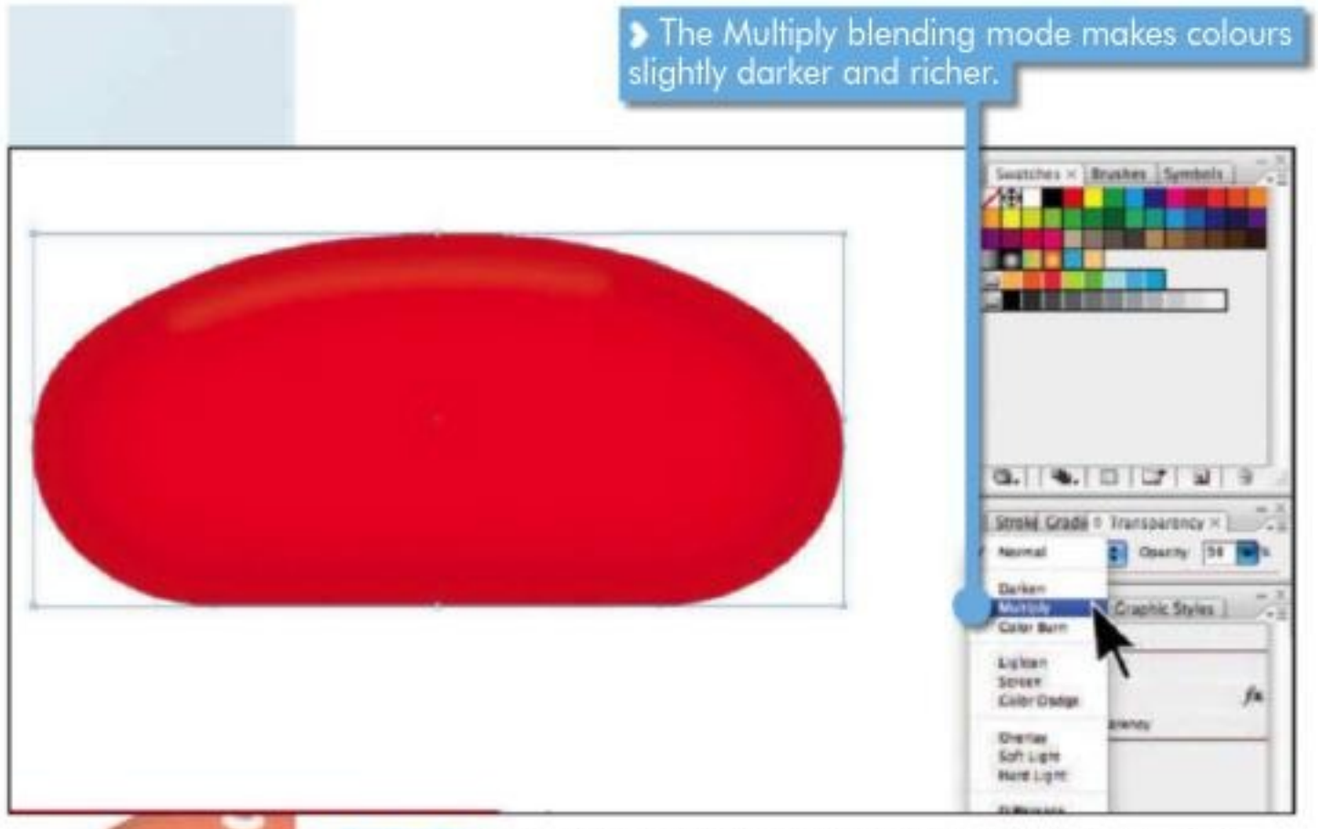


STEP 08 Now we need to add the shading around the edges of the shape. Select the background shape and **Cmd/Ctrl + C > Cmd/Ctrl + F** to copy and paste on top of itself. Knock out the fill of this new shape and change the stroke colour values to C0, M100, Y100 and K32. Thicken the stroke to 10 pixels.



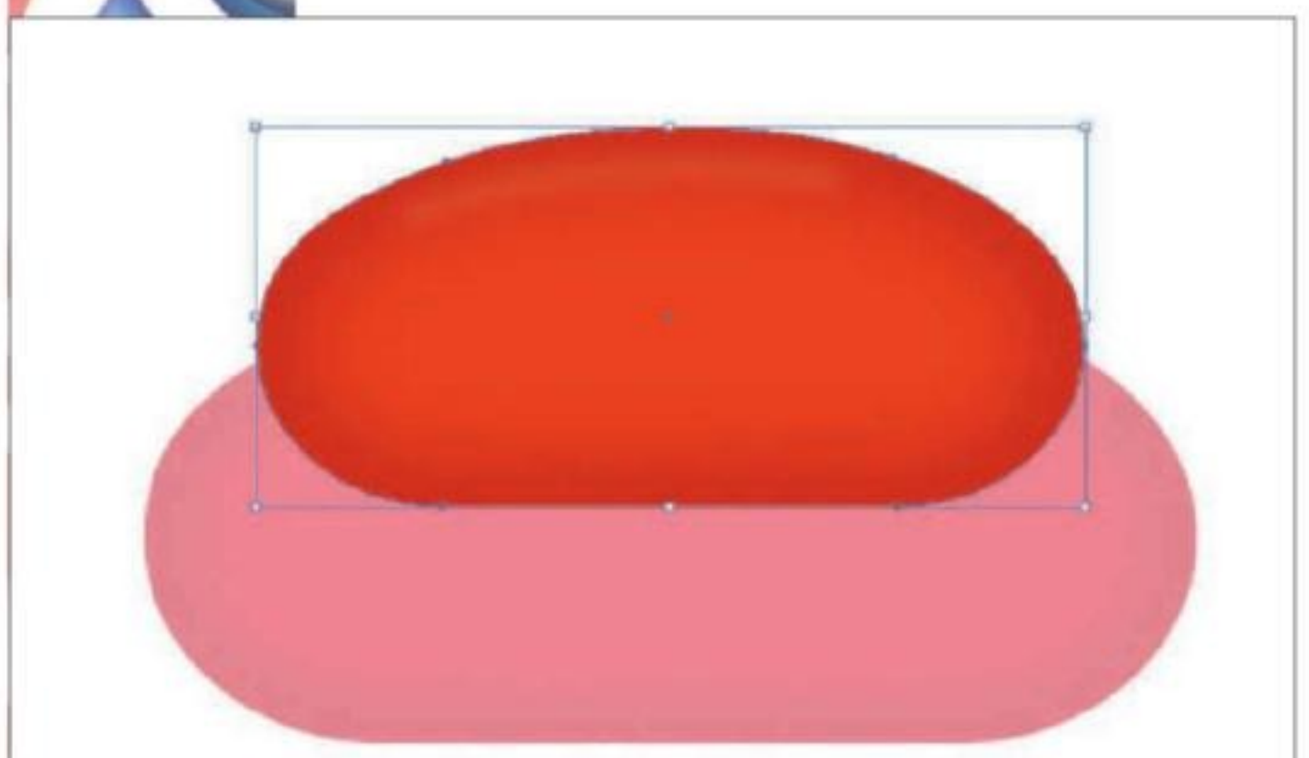
STEP 09 In the menu bar, click Effect. Don't then click Apply Gaussian Blur, as this will use the last-used settings. We want to use slightly different settings for the shading – click Gaussian Blur and set the radius to 40 pixels.

"We need to mask the group so that any shading we apply stays within the borders of the shape"



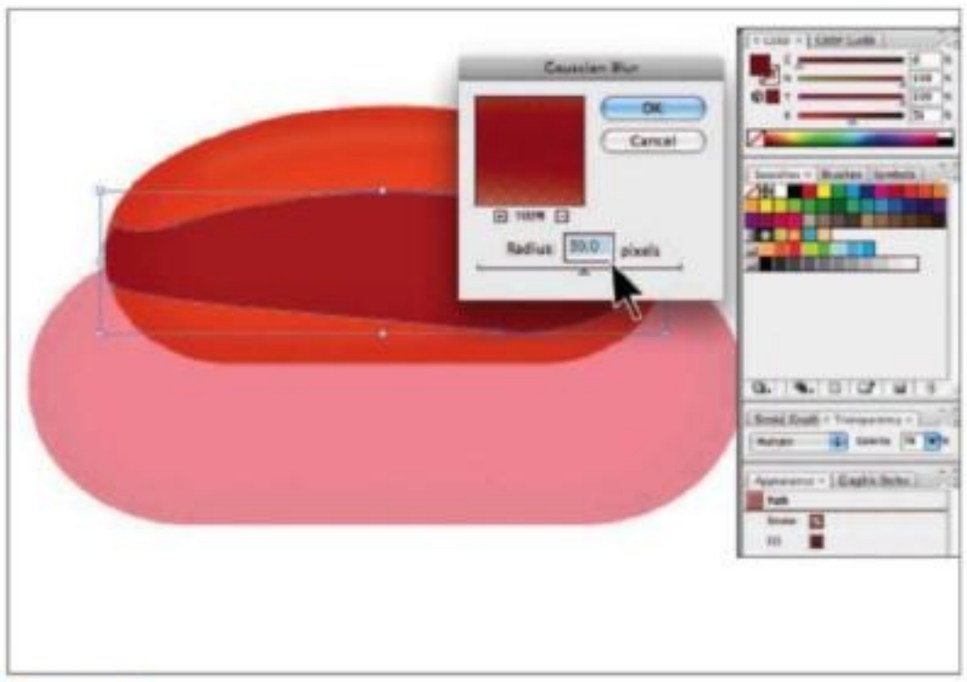
STEP 10 In the Transparency palette, change the blending mode to Multiply and reduce the opacity to 90%.

STEP 11 Double-click on an empty space to exit the group. Then, holding down **Alt/Opt + Shift**, click and drag a copy of the group directly above the original. Make it slightly smaller and place behind the original group by hitting **Cmd/Ctrl + [**.

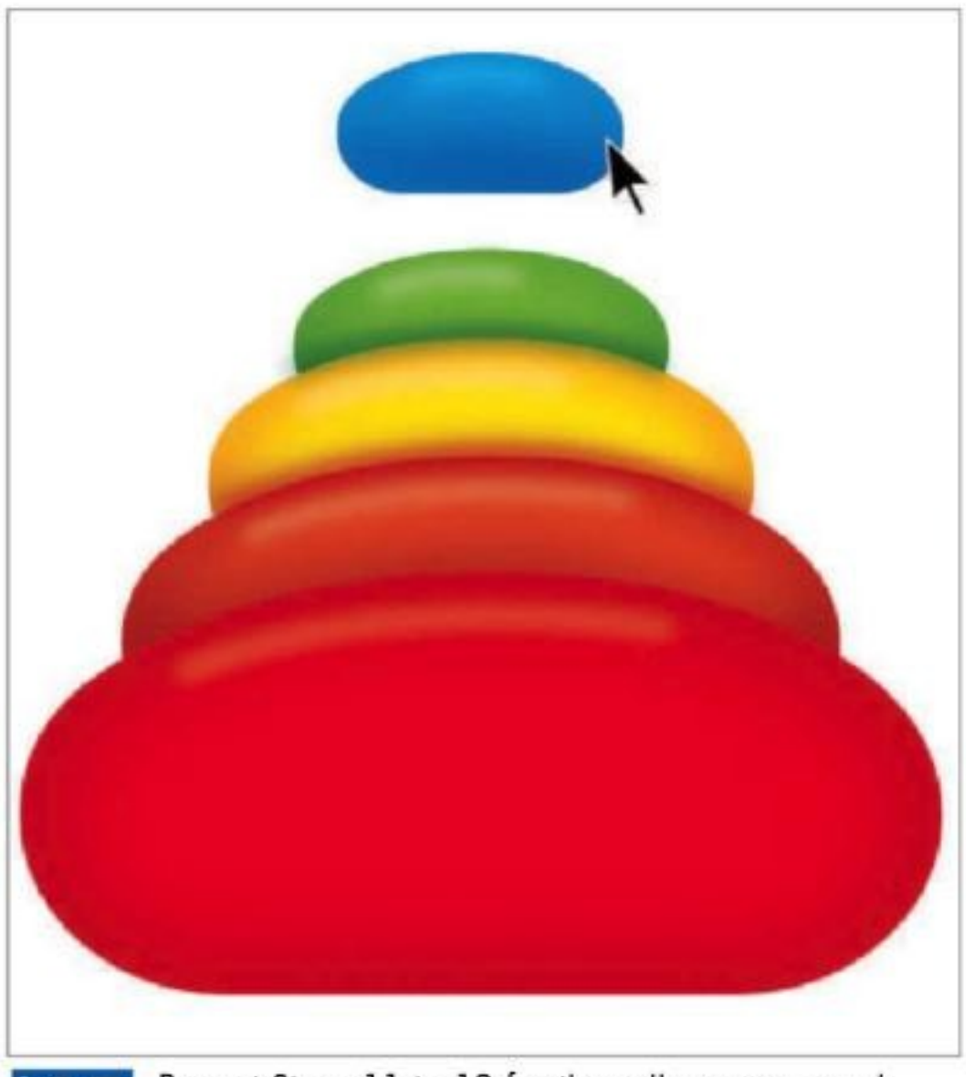


STEP 12 Double-click the new group to enter it, then select the background shape and change the fill to a deeper orange. You may find it difficult to select the background shape as the Gaussian Blur effect on the shading may overlap it: to get around this, place the shading line at the back of the group by selecting it and hitting **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + [**, and then change the colour of the background shape, before placing it at the back again by selecting it and hitting **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + [**.

STEP 13 Using the Pen tool (**P**), draw a shape that will become the shading at the bottom of the section. Fill with the same colour as the shading stroke, set the blending mode to Multiply and reduce the opacity to 56%.



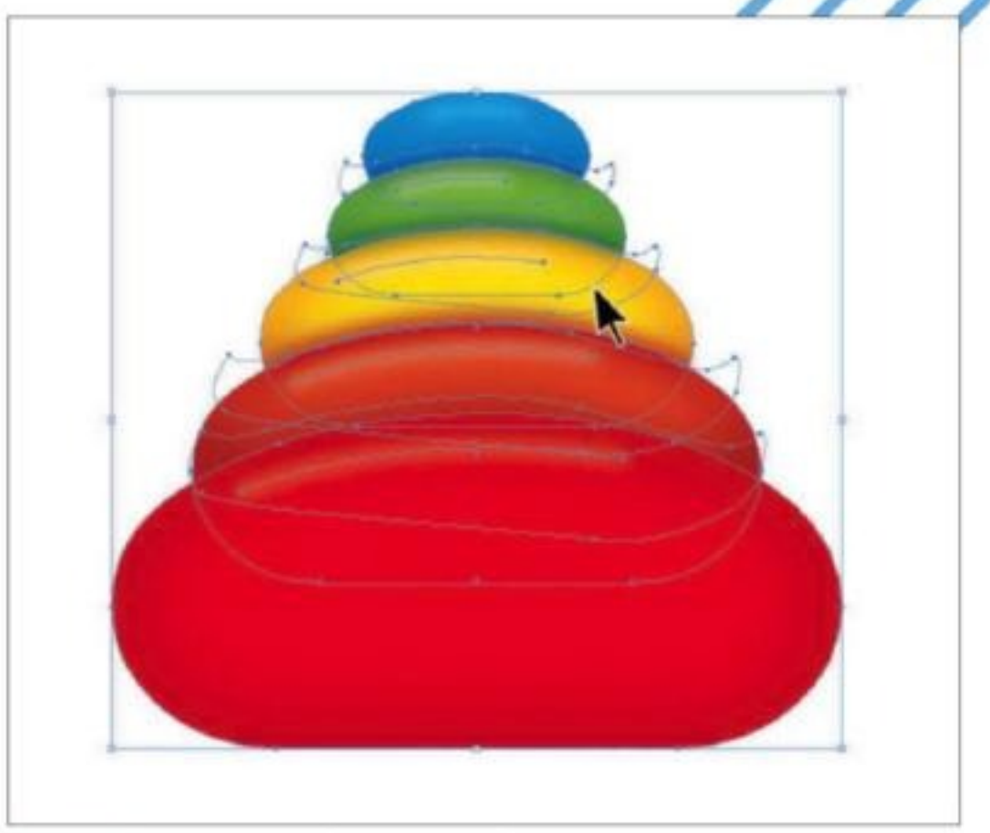
STEP 14 Then, in the menu bar, select **Effect > Gaussian Blur** and set it to 30 pixels. Double-click in an empty space on the art board to leave the group.



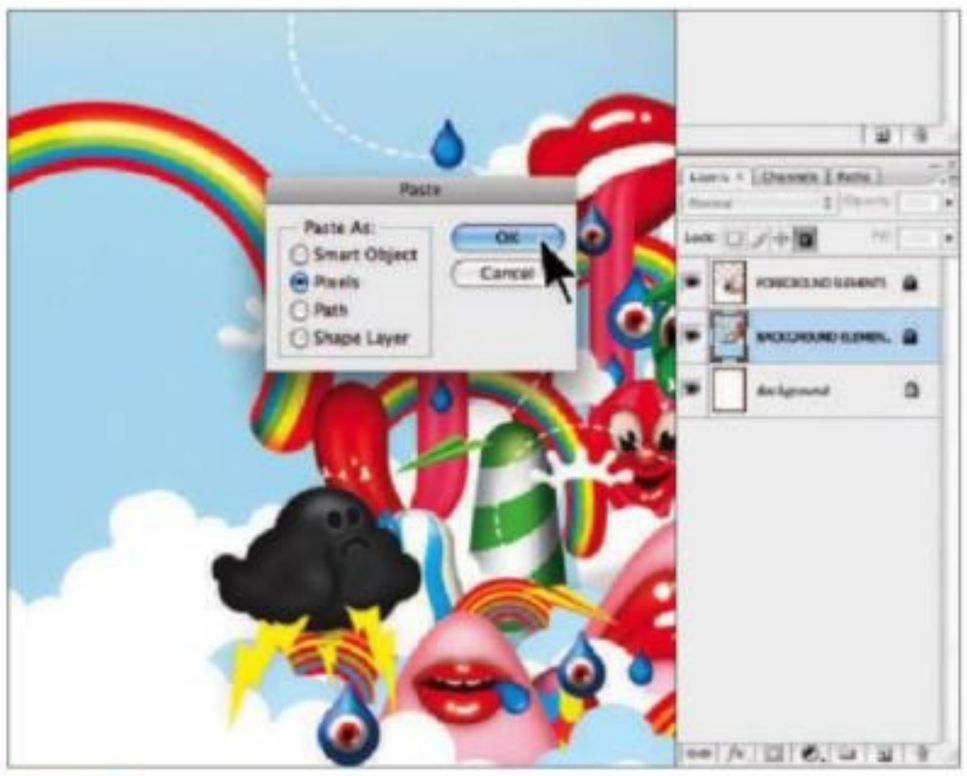
STEP 15 Repeat Steps 11 to 13 for the yellow, green and blue rings of the volcano, changing the colour of the shading to match each layer.

TIP

› When you open an Illustrator document in Photoshop you get a choice between opening As Smart Object or As Pixels. Selecting As smart object will keep the document as an editable vector element, so it can be updated in Illustrator at any time and will scale without loss of quality in Photoshop. This can be very useful, but takes up a lot of processing speed and isn't needed for what we're doing here.

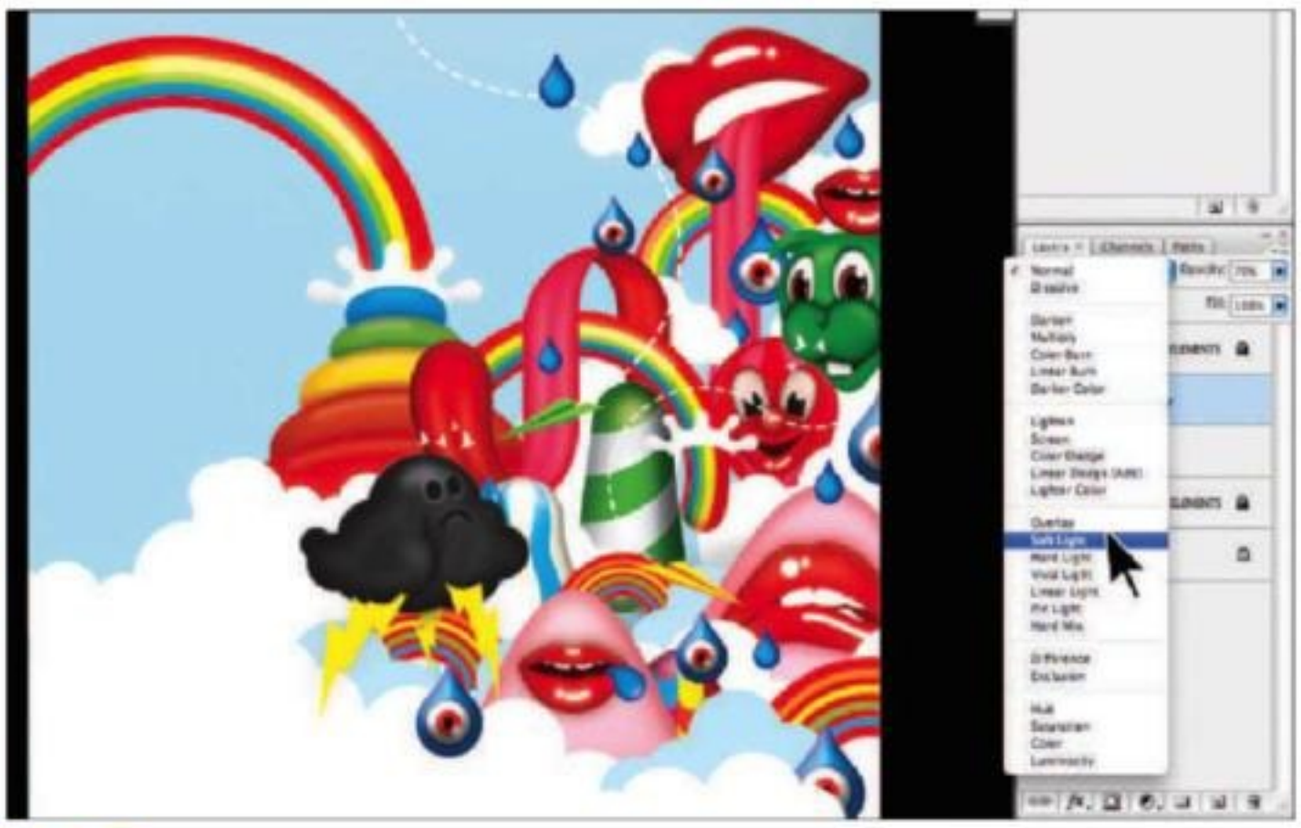


STEP 16 Group all five layers of the volcano by clicking and dragging a box around all of them with the selection tool and then hitting **Cmd/Ctrl + G**. Then **Cmd/Ctrl + C** to copy the new group.

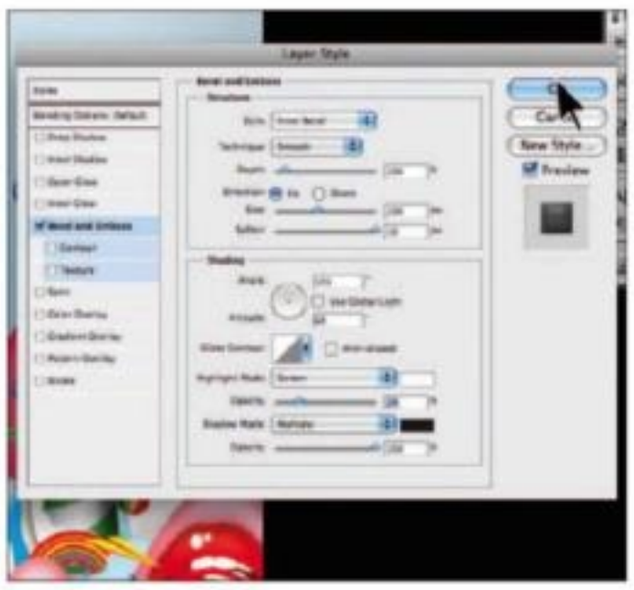


STEP 17 Now open up *unicorns.psd* file in the project files in Photoshop. Select the 'background elements' layer in the layers palette and paste **Cmd/Ctrl + V** the volcano vector object. Select As pixels in the dialog box that pops up.

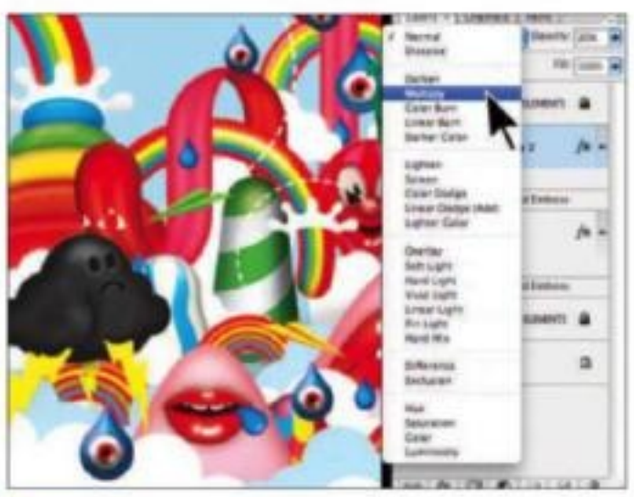
STEP 18 Position it in line with the splash at the bottom of the large rainbow on the left. Then, in the Layers palette, click and drag the layer onto the Create new layer button at the bottom of the Layers palette to duplicate the layer. ›



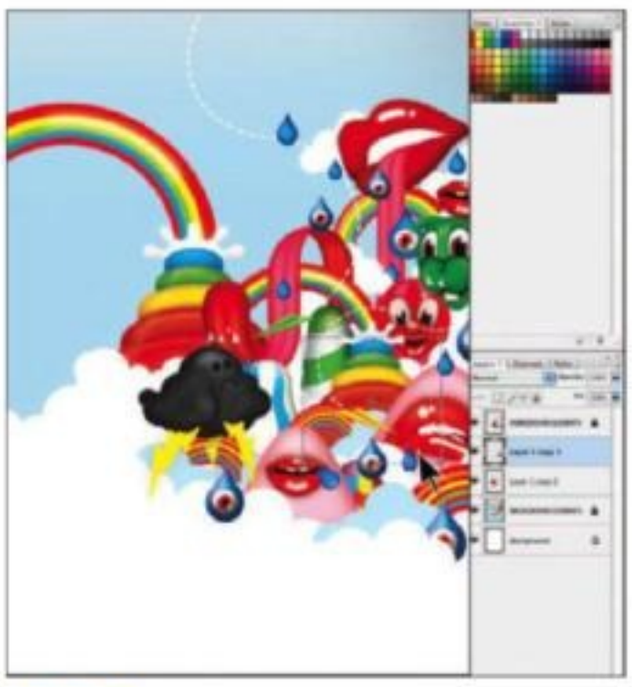
STEP 19 Set the blending mode of the new layer to Soft Light and reduce the opacity to 70%.



STEP 20 Select both layers by holding down **Cmd/Ctrl** and clicking on one then the other. Hit **Cmd/Ctrl + E** to merge the two together. Double-click the new layer to bring up the Layer Styles box. Select Bevel and Emboss' from the styles list on the left. Uncheck the Use global light box and set the depth to 100%. Set the size to 100 pixels and the soften to 16 pixels. In the Shading option set the angle to 101° and the altitude to 64°. Then set the highlight opacity to 24 and the shadow opacity to 100.



STEP 21 Duplicate this new layer again by dragging onto the Create new layer button at the bottom of the Layers palette. Set the blending mode to Multiply and the opacity to 20%. Select both layers and merge again using **Cmd/Ctrl + E**.



STEP 22 Now duplicate this layer by holding **Alt/Opt** while clicking and dragging, place it in front of the smaller splash and rainbow to the right and resize (**Cmd/Ctrl + T**) to fit.

STEP 23 As a final adjustment, select the top layer, 'Foreground elements', in the layers palette. Then in the menu bar, select **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Brightness/Contrast**. Set the brightness to +6 and the contrast to +18 and the image is complete. ■

INFO ...THERE WILL BE UNICORNS

Having cut his creative teeth at McFaul Studio, Thomas Burden has now ventured out on his own. While working for McFaul, he had the opportunity to work for major-league clients including Saatchi & Saatchi, Disney, and Bob Dylan. Since going freelance his commissions have included work for *Don't Panic* and Samsung.

CONTACT
- *therewillbeunicorns.com*

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 3 hours

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

Left A logo that Burden designed as part of a full rebrand for a 'green' events company.

Below A poster for a scheme at Belkin offering a holiday as a prize for making sales.

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INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2-3 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS3 or above

› LEARN VECTOR LIQUID IMAGING

How to draw **Liquid**

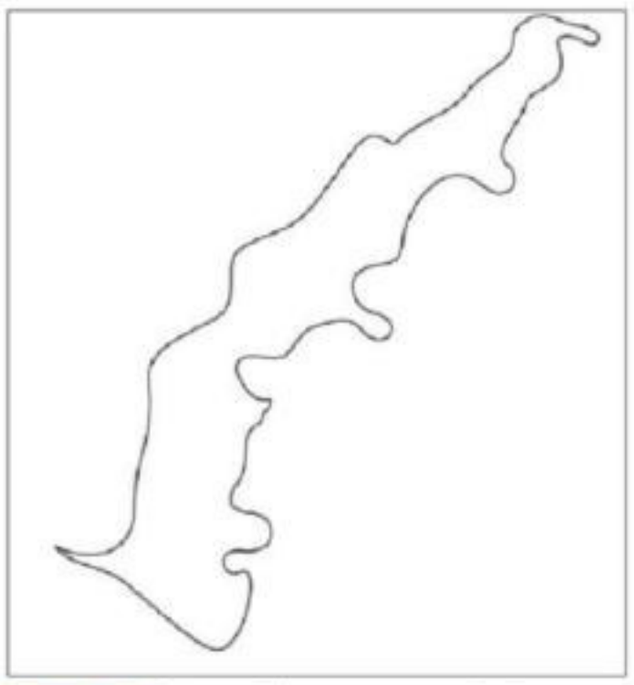
Use Illustrator's Mesh and Warp tools to create a glossy water splash

Creating convincing liquid effects in vector illustration can be a tricky business. Luckily, Jing Zhang has provided us with this tutorial that shows you how to make a real splash with your art. You'll learn numerous Illustrator techniques to create vector liquid, by playing around with Illustrator's Mesh tool, Warp tool and layer blending properties.

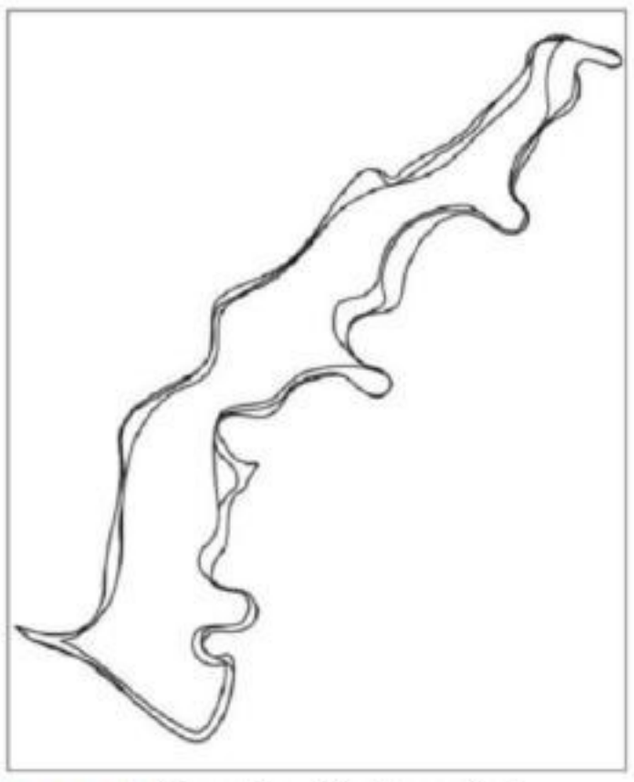
The Mesh tool is often overlooked, but it is one of Illustrator's most powerful tools. You can use it to create realistic 3D effects and it allows you to give your work a unique finish.

ANOTHER FINE MESH...

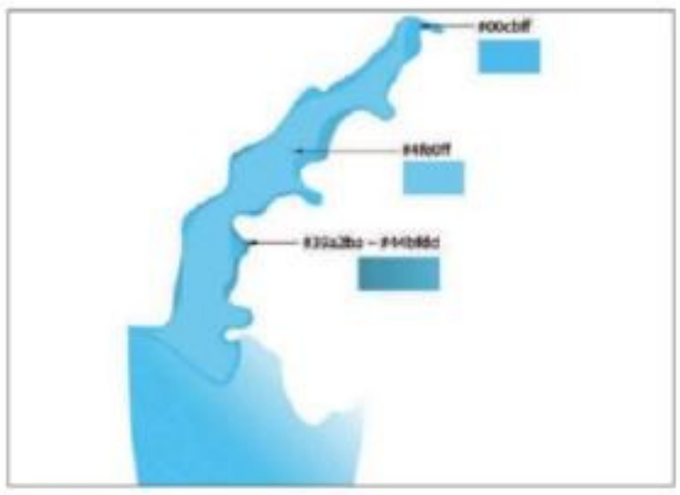
› Before you apply the Mesh tool, be sure to reduce the number of anchor points and the complexity of the item. If you can't do it by hand, you can always use **Object > Path > Offset Path** to extract the outline of a Mesh as a Path object.



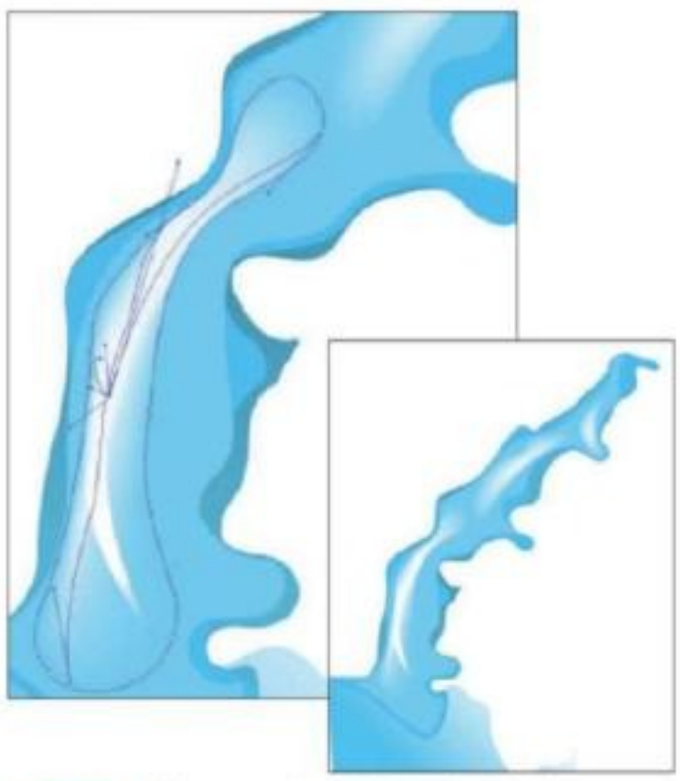
STEP 01 Fire up Illustrator and using the Pen tool (**P**), draw a basic shape of a water splash. Speed up your tracing progress by using keyboard shortcuts as you draw, such as the Selection tool (**A**), Direct Selection tool (**V**), Convert Anchor Point (**Shift + C**), Pen tool (**P**), Add Anchor Point (**+**) and Delete Anchor Point (**-**).



STEP 02 Copy the object you just created and use **Ctrl/Cmd + F** to paste it in the same place twice. The more layers there are, the better the effect will be. Next, click on the Warp tool (**Shift + R**) and using the default setting, warp the top and the middle layer as shown in the picture above.

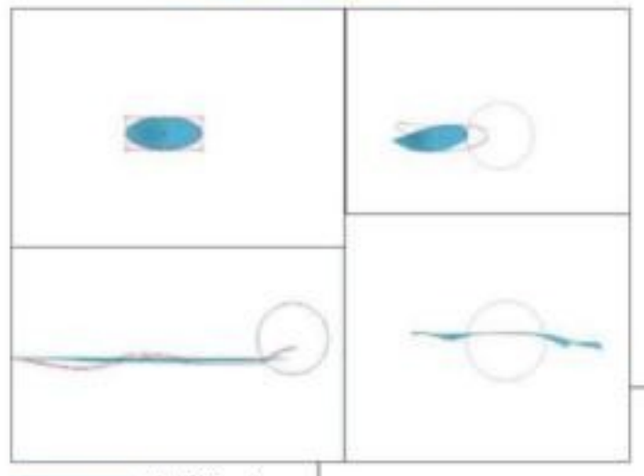


STEP 03 Colour all the objects in blue, either using the Pantone shades shown above, or by creating your own – just make sure the outer layer is in the darkest colour and the inner one the lightest.

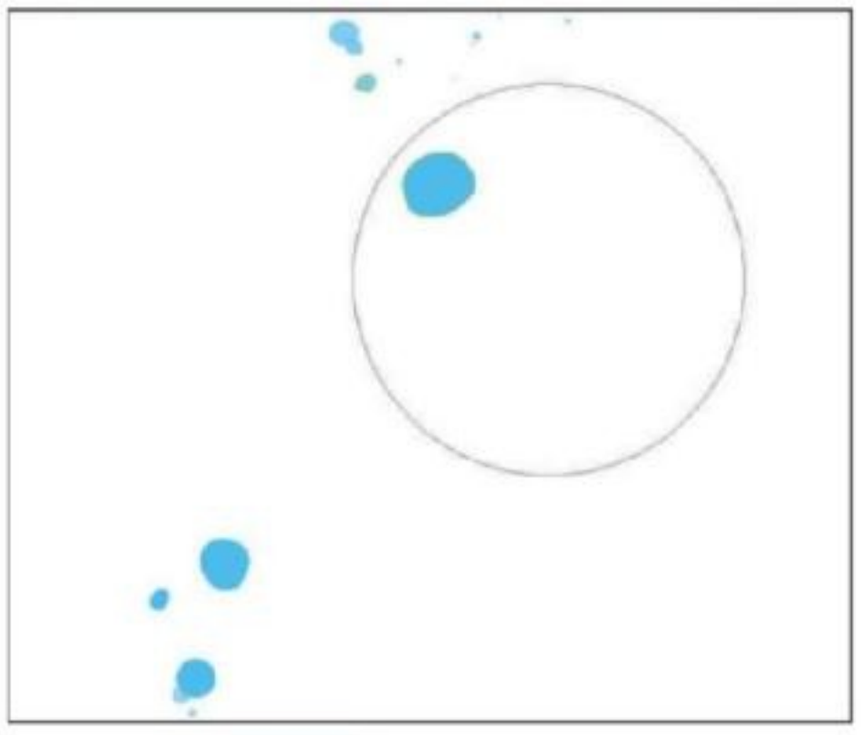


STEP 04 Next, we'll add the highlights. On the top layer, use the Pen tool (**P**) to draw up an object similar to the one shown. Try to use as few anchor points as possible to avoid complicating the mesh later. Fill the shape with the same colour as the top splash layer – the lightest blue. Using the Mesh tool (**U**), click on the centre of the highlight, and fill the anchor point with white colour. Adjust the anchor point and its arrows to make it look smooth.

Repeat this technique on the other areas of the splash, creating more highlights until your picture starts to look glossy.

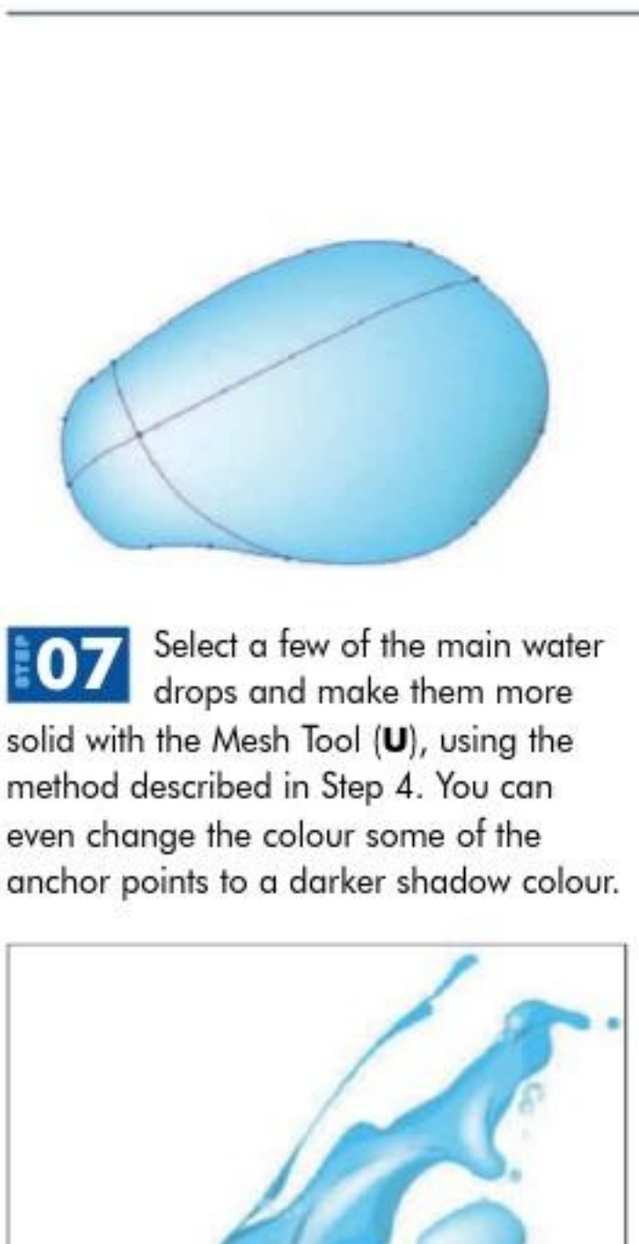


STEP 05 With the Ellipse tool (**L**), draw an ellipse object of any size. By stretching and warping the object with the Warp tool (**Shift + R**), you can 'liquefy' its shape naturally. Add some dark twisted strokes to make up the motion of the splash. In illustration, details define the quality, so it's definitely worth taking more time over this step.

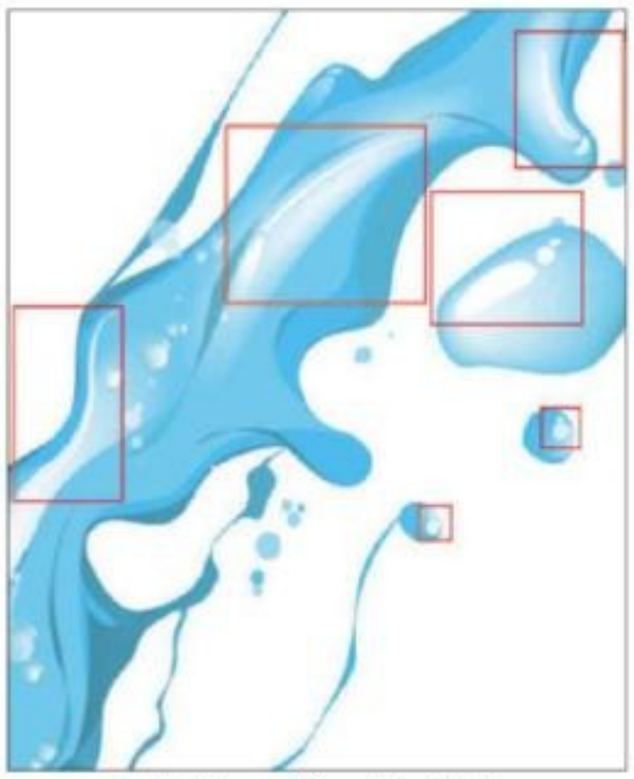


STEP 06 Still with the Ellipse tool (**L**) selected, create a few water drops of various transparencies. As real water drops are rarely uniform in shape use the Warp tool (**Shift + R**) again to make them look more realistic. ›

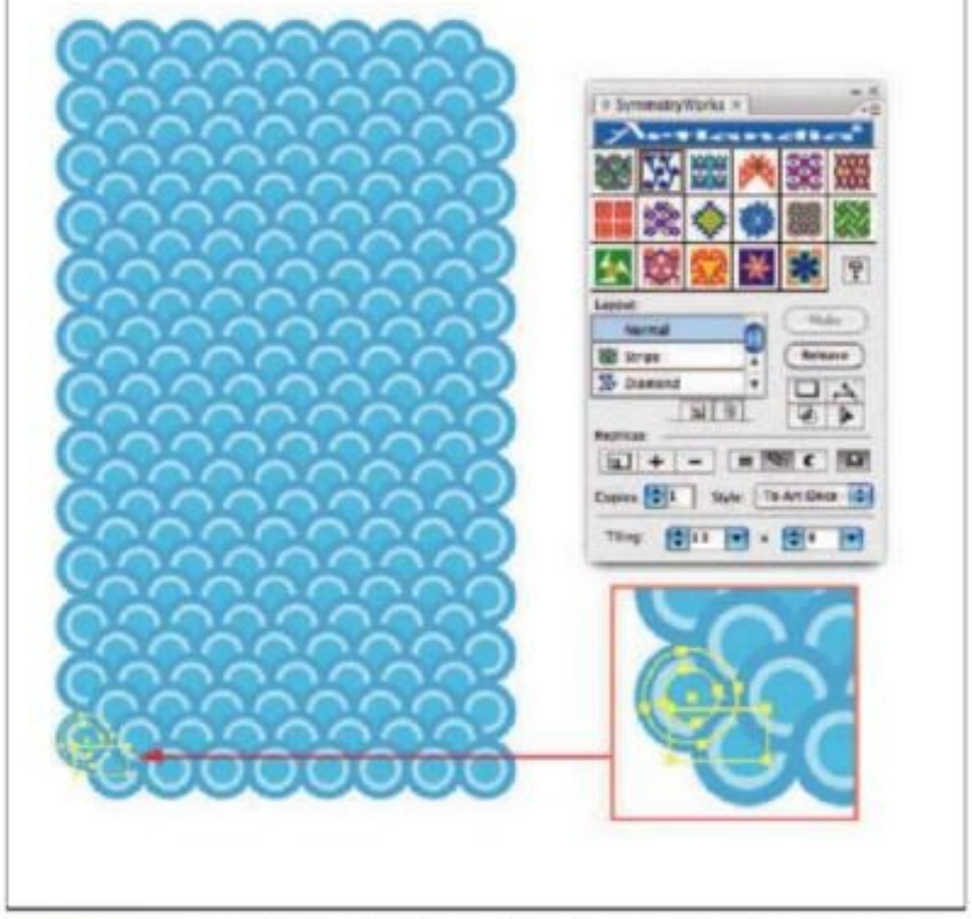
STEP 07 Select a few of the main water drops and make them more solid with the Mesh Tool (**U**), using the method described in Step 4. You can even change the colour some of the anchor points to a darker shadow colour.



STEP 08 Composition is crucial, particularly in a piece with lots of natural elements, so be careful not to overdo any particular sections. Here, I've given prominence to the right-hand side of the splash, where the water pours.



STEP 09 Add sparkling highlights to your splash as shown here. Vary the opacity of each highlight shape from 50% to 95%. This subtle detail will dramatically improve the texture's appearance.



STEP 10 To create the Koi, I used the help of a plug-in called SymmetryWorks to make the fish scales. You don't need the plug-in to make them, but it saves a lot of time! You can either download it from *artlandia.com/products/SymmetryWorks* and follow my settings as shown above, or you can create your own. Then, with your pattern selected, go to **Object > Expand**.

STEP 11 Draw a Koi and duplicate the body shape, using one as a mask for the fish scale (**Ctrl/Cmd + 7**). Colour the other parts with gradient colour. With luck, your Koi carp should look similar to the one here on the right.

STEP 12 To make the fish look solid, duplicate its body and fill it with darker blue colour. Next, apply the Mesh tool (**U**) and, using the same method as described in Steps 4 and 7, add an anchor point in the middle, and fill it with white. Click on Opacity in the menu bar and set the blending mode to Multiply in the drop-down menu.

STEP 13 To add extra highlights to the fish, use the Pen tool (**P**) to draw a blue shape, repeat the Mesh tool method and fill the middle anchor point with white colour. Finally, change the blending mode to Lighten.

Copy and paste the Koi carp to different areas and vary their size and rotation. Use the layer stack to place them in front and behind the water.

STEP 14 We're almost there, so lets add in the glass now. Use the Pen tool (**P**) to draw the outline of a glass with a stroke weight of about 3pt.

STEP 15 Finally, duplicate the glass object but close the path, and fill it with dark grey. Use the Mesh tool (**U**) to add a few anchor points. Change the colour of some of the anchor points to white.

Next, change the blending mode to Screen and set the opacity to 69%. Save this as a new layer at the top of the stack. I've included some additional elements in my finished design – fruit slices and ice – so why not add your own touches? ■

PROFILE JING ZHANG

› Originally from China, London-based creative designer and illustrator Jing makes her living by doing things she loves. She works for clients including *Lonely Planet*, Ford, Osiris, and more.

CONTACT

• *mazakii.com*

CHAPTER 6

PATTERN DESIGN

CREATE ARTWORKS THAT TILE SEAMLESSLY

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

> **LEARN** REPEATING VECTOR GRAPHICS

Create quirky repeating patterns

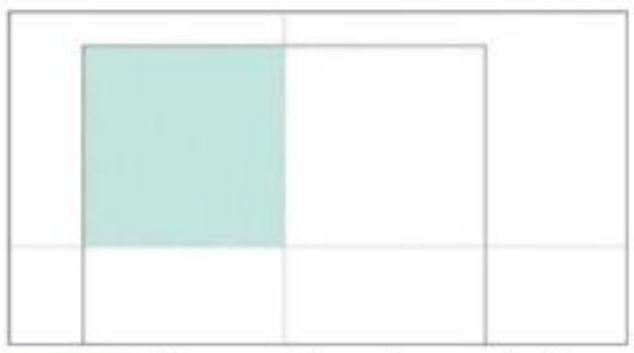
Delve into your imagination for kooky maps with **Imakethings**

On this tutorial, Imakethings (known to his mum as Andrew Groves) shows you how to make a repeat pattern based on map-like imagery. He uses simple shapes and icons to illustrate geographical features from a bird's-eye point of view similar to those used in OS maps.

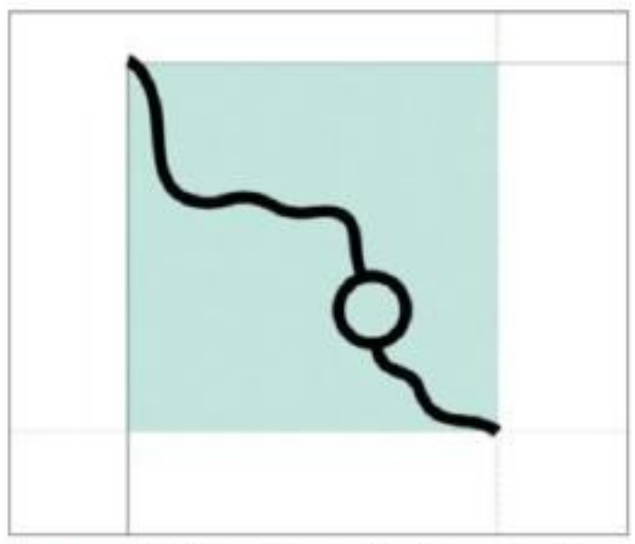
However, unlike in an official map, Imakethings uses bright colours and adds a few creatures here and there to create a whimsical, magical landscape. The map tiles to make a recurring image that could be applied to any number of surfaces.

The techniques you'll pick up here can be applied a wide range of other images to conjure up patterns for textiles, T-shirt prints or anything else you put your mind to.

STEP 01 As we're making a pattern based on maps we need to start with some research. Take a look at old maps created by early adventurers and explorers or the maps that accompany storybooks. Even better, go for a walk and make a map of the things you see. However you do your research, it's very important that you make some sketches before you get started on the computer.

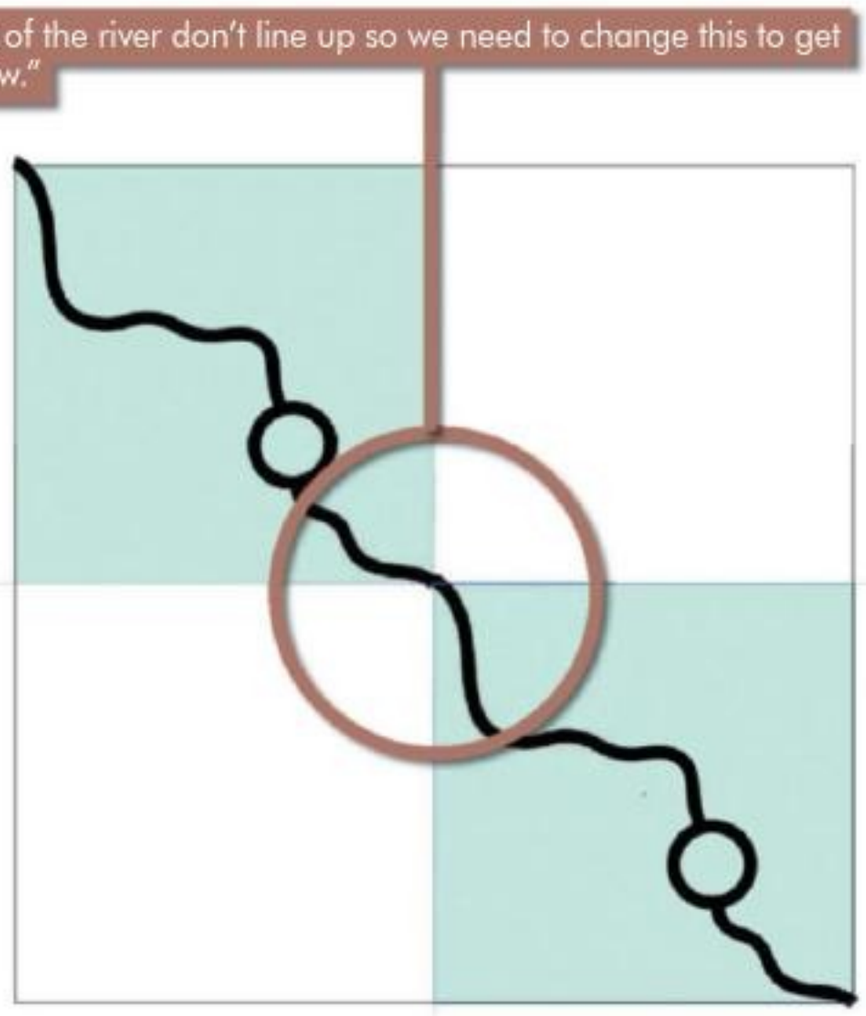


STEP 02 Once you've got your sketches, have a think about what you want your finished pattern to be used for. I'm making mine into a print. I find it much easier to make repeat patterns using squares, so let's start by making a new square document in Illustrator. Create a square in the corner of your screen that's a quarter of the size of the document using the Rectangle tool. Fill it with the colour you want the background to be. Split the document into four quarters using the guides.

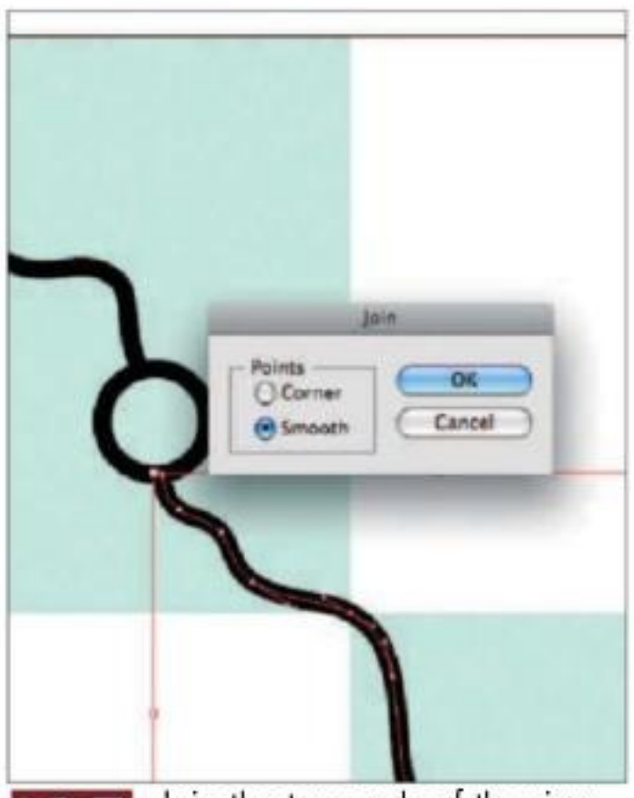


STEP 03 With patterns it's important to make things flow nicely, so I'm having a seemingly never-ending river running diagonally across the design. Working diagonally also helps when lining things up. Draw the river roughly using the Pencil tool (**N**) or the Pen tool (**P**) from corner to corner – or open *River.ai* from the project files.

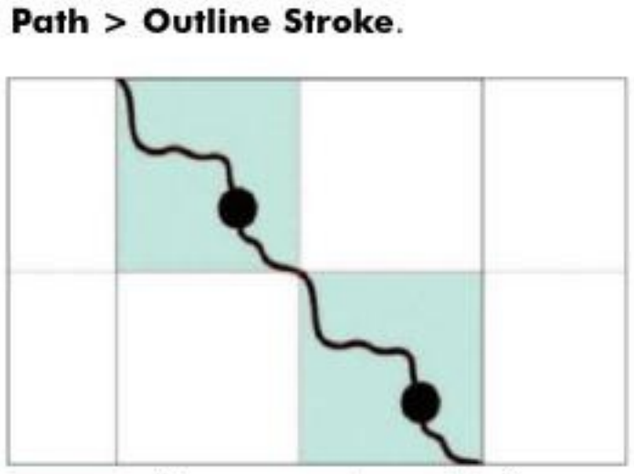
"The two ends of the river don't line up so we need to change this to get the pattern to flow."



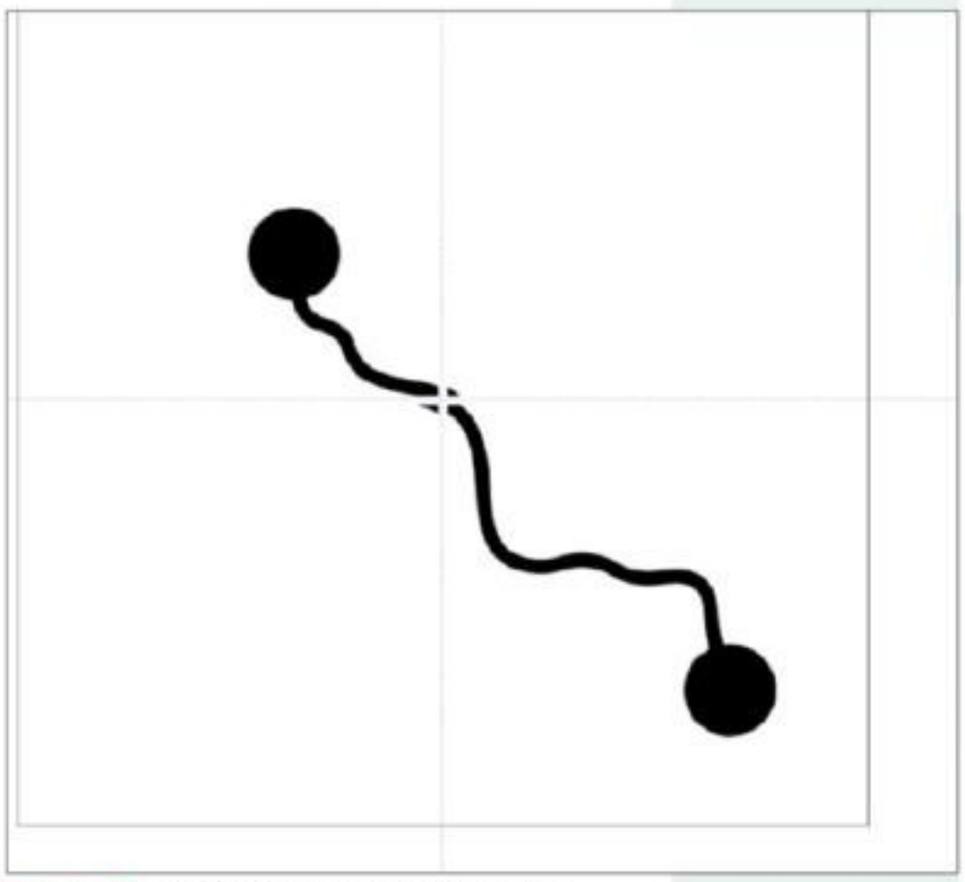
STEP 04 Because the pattern needs to tile, any objects that go up to the edge of the square need to match up on the other sides. **To do this,** copy and paste the original and place the copy in the bottom right hand corner. You'll see that the two ends of the river don't line up so we need to change this to get the pattern to flow.



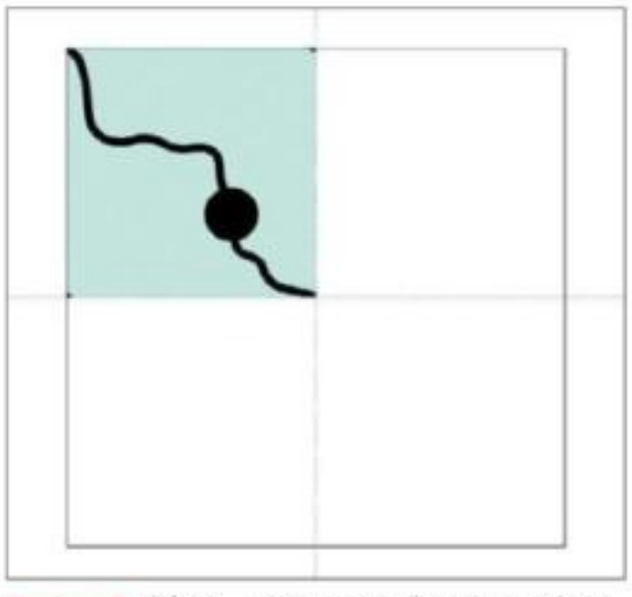
STEP 05 Join the two ends of the river by selecting them with the Direct Selection tool and press **Cmd/Ctrl + Alt/Opt + Shift + J.** Select the Smooth option. Play around with the anchor points to get a smooth line. Outline the whole stroke: **Object > Path > Outline Stroke**.



STEP 06 Now we need get rid of any pieces that extend beyond our square. Select all (**Cmd/Ctrl + A**). Click the Divide button in the Pathfinder palette. This will make each shape a separate object.



STEP 07 To finish the tile so that the river infinitely repeats, you need to join the matching pieces up. Delete the parts you don't need, leaving the parts you do.

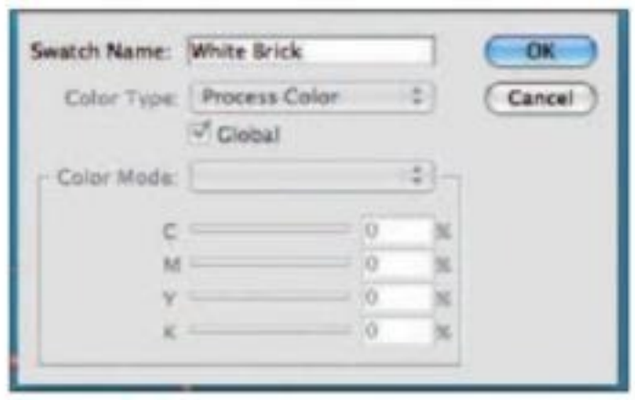


STEP 08 Next, rearrange the parts that are left to create the tiling image. Re-draw the background tile.

TIP

› It's easier to create tiling patterns using squares. Use patterns within patterns to make interesting textures and fills. If any of the objects go over the edge of your tile they have to continue in and match up on the opposite edge.

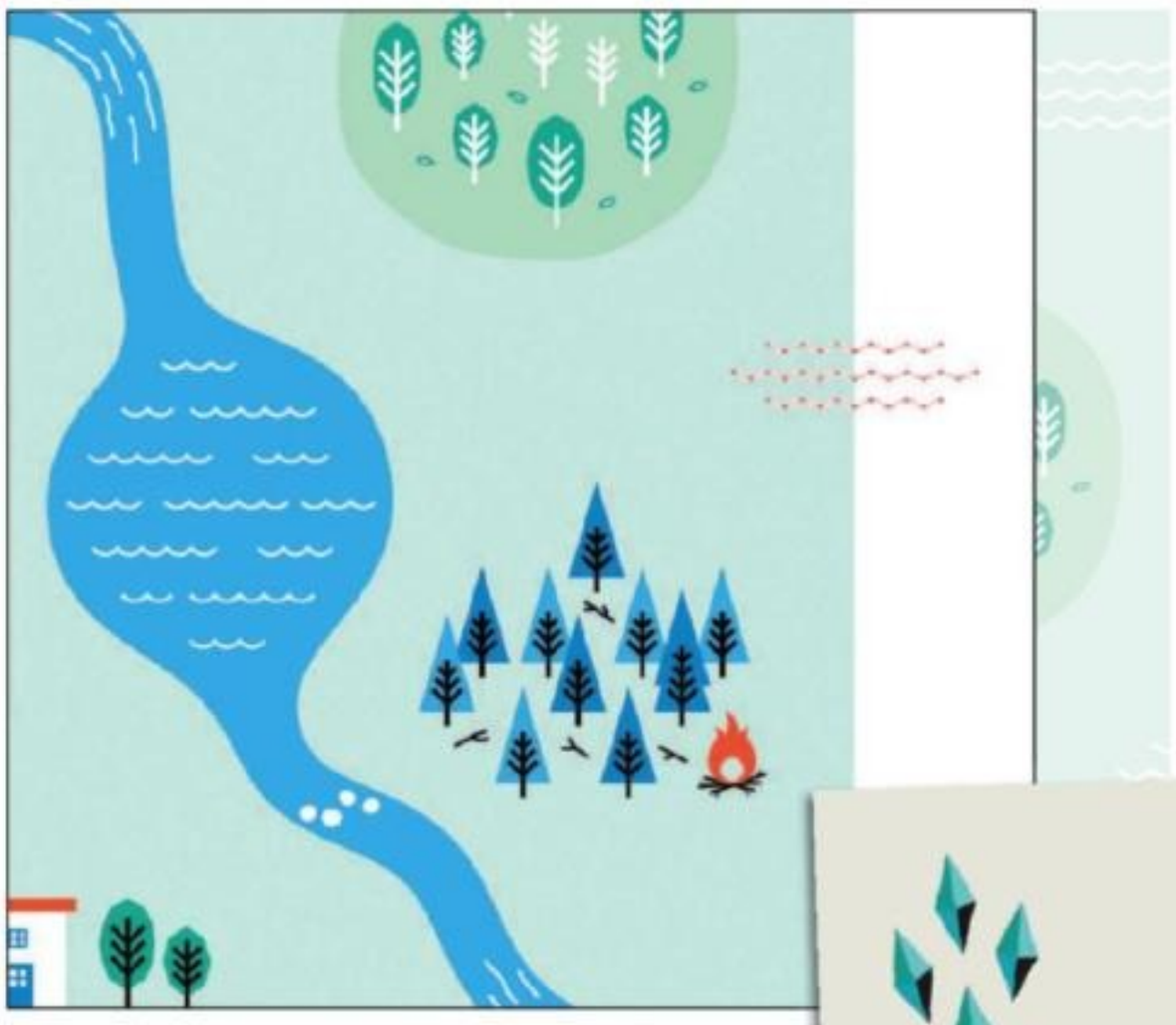
STEP 09 Now we've finished the river – the focal point of the pattern – we can start adding the details. Stick to the middle of the tile at this point – this saves you from having to worry about making things match up. I'm using simplified natural shapes or icons, but how you choose to illustrate your map is up to you.



STEP 10 I like to use patterns within patterns. This is something commonly used in maps – for example, in OS maps, forests are marked with a tree design. I'm using a brick pattern to add some texture to my mountains. To do this, use the Pattern Swatches palette. Draw the shape you want repeated, in this case some bricks. Then select it and go to **Edit > Define Pattern**. This creates a new pattern swatch, which you can then use to fill any object.

STEP 11 Keep adding more detail, referring to your sketches as you go. I'm adding little areas of birch trees, some stepping-stones and a few camp fires. It's a good idea to occasionally tile your pattern to see how it's looking by copying and pasting the original. You can then spot any gaps in the pattern and move things around.

STEP 12 Now we're really getting there. To finish off I'm adding a few wavy lines over the edges of the tile to help the pattern flow a little better, using the same technique that we used on the river. Select the area that falls outside the tile with the Direct Selection tool (**A**) then Cut (**Cmd/Ctrl + X**) and paste (**Cmd/Ctrl + V**) this on the opposite side of the tile, using the smart guides to line it up. Now when you place two tiles they will align.



› Add to the fantastical appeal of your map – and have a bit of fun – by adding in a few quirky creatures here and there.

STEP 13 To make the artwork really sing, it requires a bit more personality – literally. I've added some of my signature characters to add charm to the piece. Add creatures of your own here.

STEP 14 Now you have your finished tile, copy and paste the original and line up the corners to match. You now have a pattern that tiles indefinitely and can be made as big as you like, ready for use as a poster, fabric print or anything you fancy. ■

Above "This is a repeat pattern that I had printed onto fabric. I used many of the techniques in my tutorial to create this pattern."

Left "This is a personal illustration called The Lake Keeper. It was created to be sold as a gallery print through Society6.com."

INFO ANDREW GROVES

› Working under the name Imakethings, Andrew Groves is a freelance illustrator. He says: "I have a particular interest in the natural world, and aim to invent characters that explore the grotesque beauty of its many beasts and creatures, and the folklore that surrounds them."

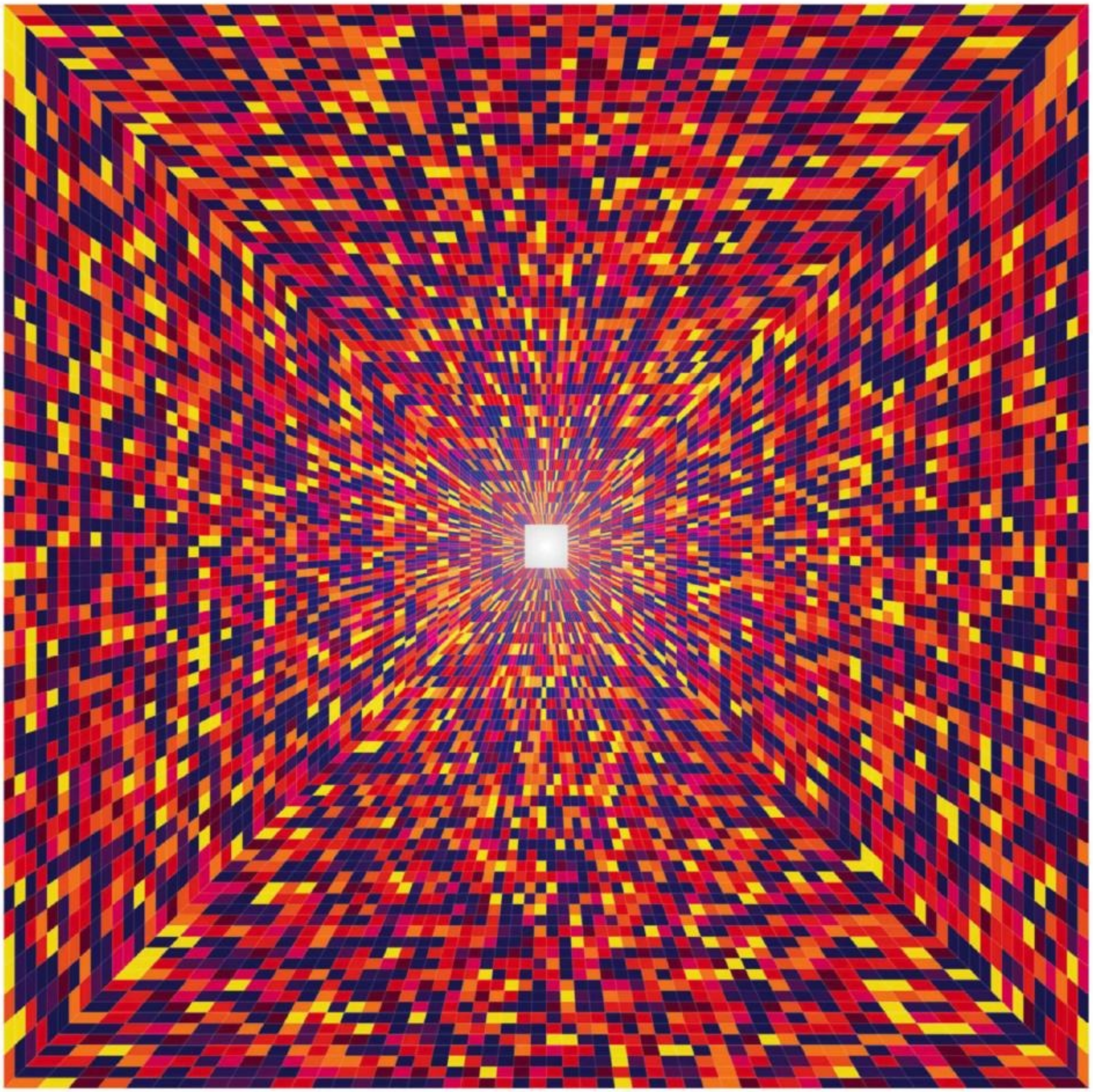
Andrew is currently based in the UK creating work for clients such as Foundation Skateboards, *Snowboarder* Magazine, Orange and Panasonic to name but a few. He is also constantly involved in self-initiated projects and schemes as well as creating work for exhibitions and shows worldwide.

CONTACT
- *imakethings.co.uk*

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*



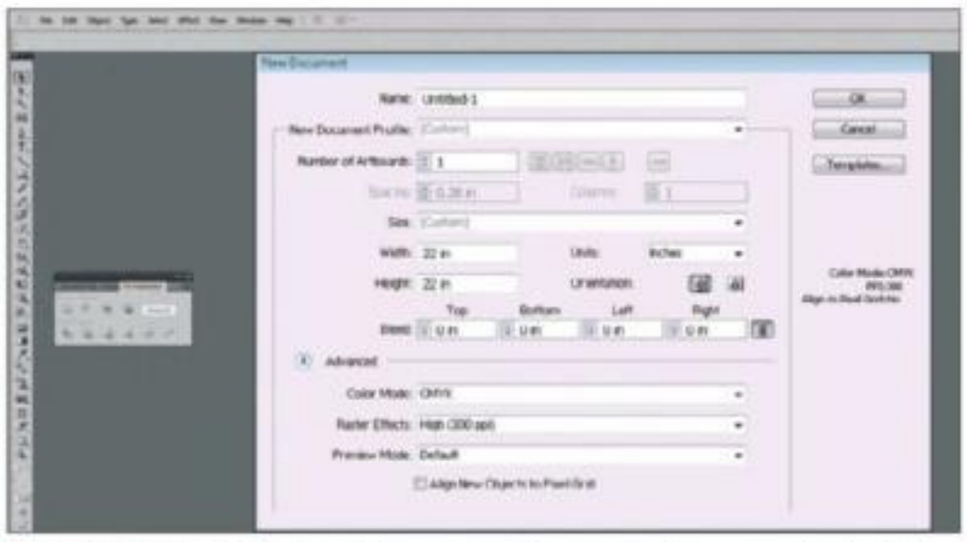
Design a geometric retro poster

Create a complex op-art design with ease using scripts and InDesign CS5's new layout tools

This tutorial explains how to create one of Simon C Page's seemingly complicated posters via some nifty tricks in Illustrator and InDesign CS5. Like most of his more intricate designs, he created this using Flash Professional CS5's ActionScript language – but here he shows you how to do it in Illustrator, using that application's ExtendScript toolkit.

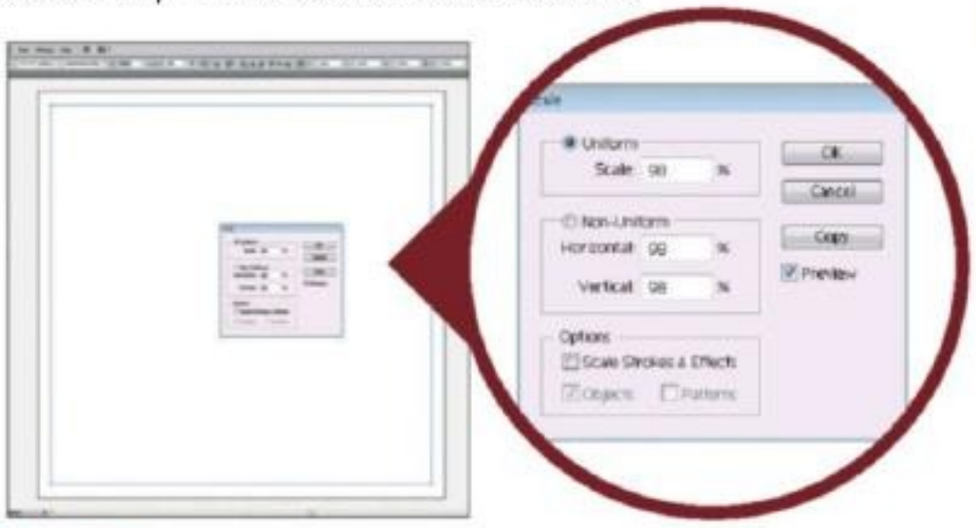
This part of the tutorial should give you enough to get you up and running with some basic scripting and an appetite to see the host of styles you can create with scripts – styles that would take you countless hours to replicate by hand.

You'll then learn how to take this artwork and turn it into a poster, drawing on the styles of classic 1950s book covers.

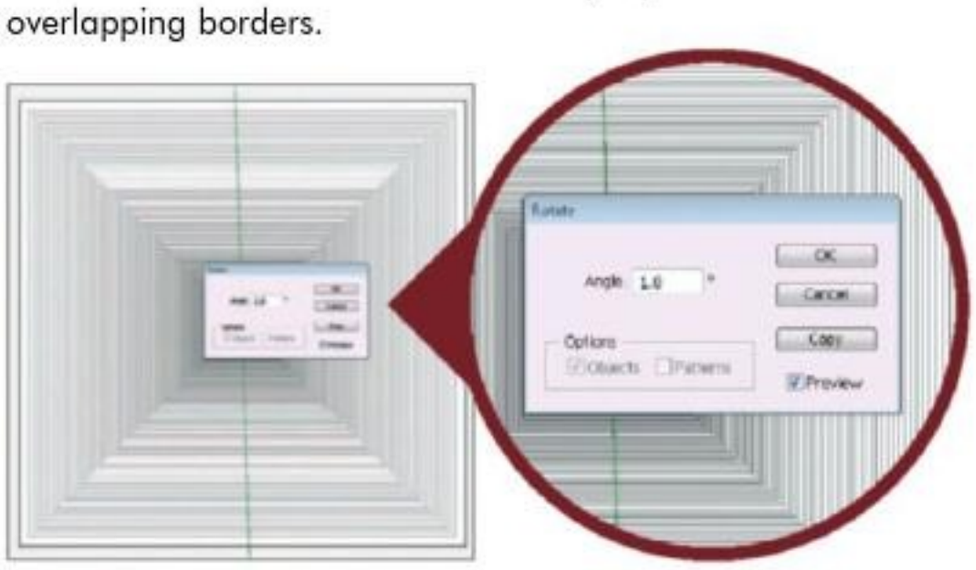


STEP 01 The first step is to create the main framework for this artwork, which is created out of a very large number of concentric squares and lines rotated round into a circle. This design is going to be square, but there is no reason you couldn't replicate it with a circle or rectangle, for example.

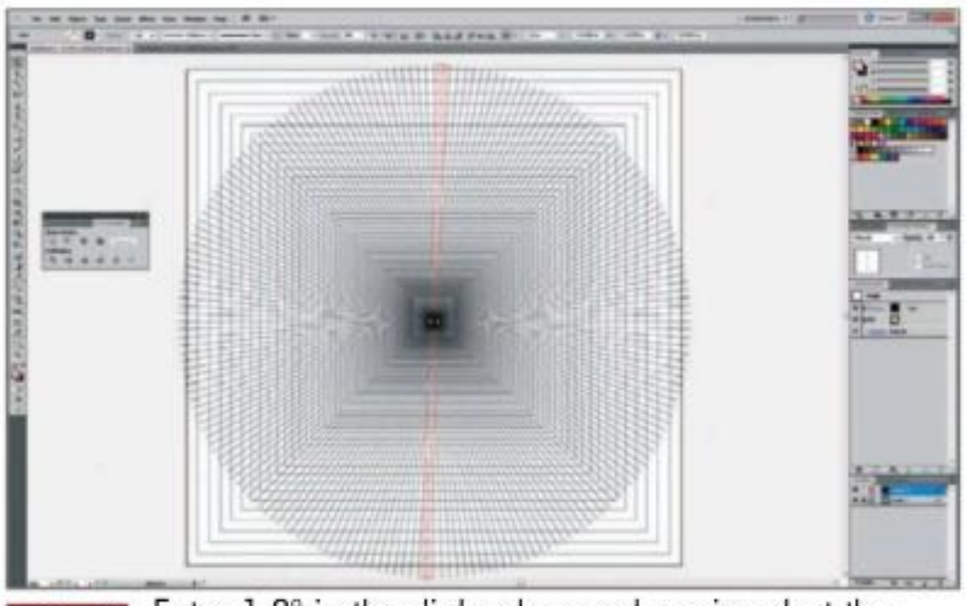
The artwork needs to be 22 x 22 inches square, and so the first square to draw should be around 21 x 21 inches, giving you a nice one-inch border. Make sure you leave the black 1pt border on, this will also be useful later on.



STEP 02 Centre this square on the document and, while selecting it, bring up the Scale dialog box (**Object > Transform > Scale**). From this enter 98% and then select Copy. This will then create a centred copy of the square at 98% of its size. Select the Transform Again function for this second square (**Cmd/Ctrl + D**) to duplicate this. Hold the keys down to repeat this until the square look very dark in the centre. Zoom in and remove any squares that have overlapping borders.

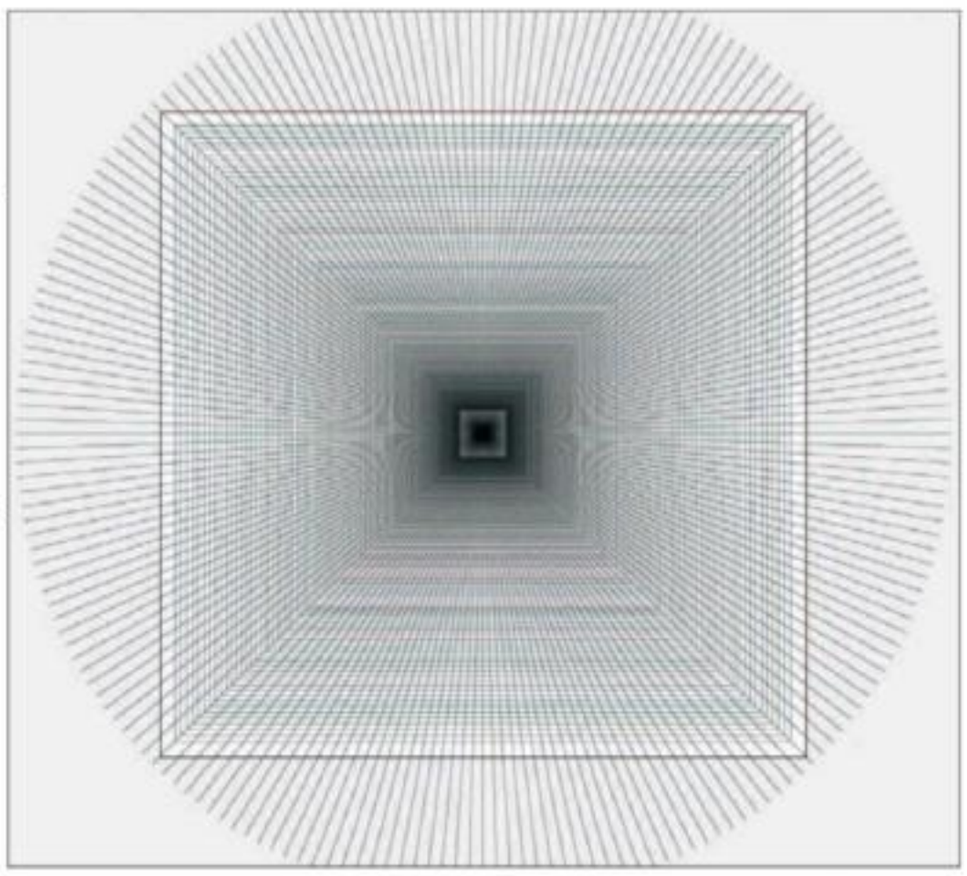


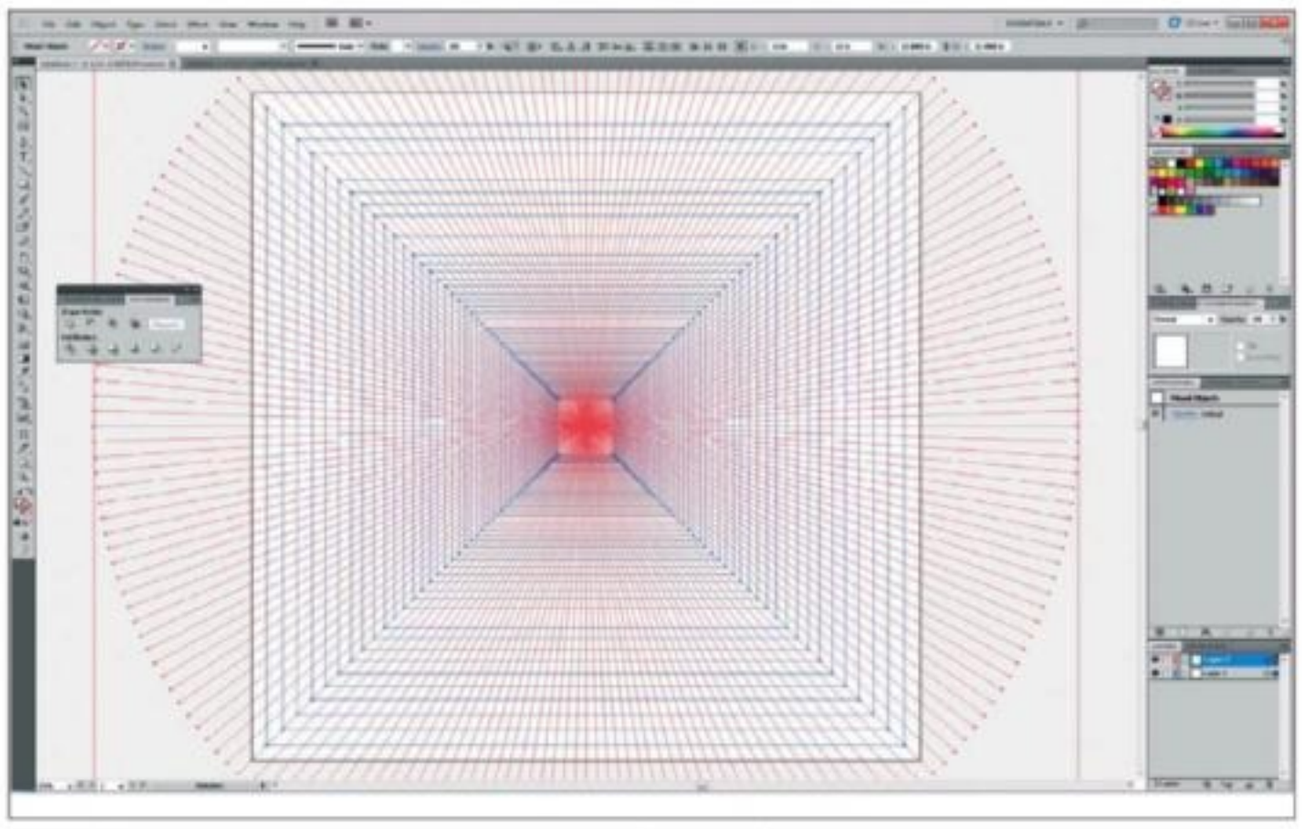
STEP 03 Now we need to do a similar technique but with a line. Create a new layer and add a 1pt black line down the middle of the page. Now bring up the Rotate dialog (**Object > Transform > Rotate**). We want 200 lines, which equates to a 1.8° rotation on each to make a circle.



STEP 04 Enter 1.8° in the dialog box and again select the Copy button, which will leave the original line but also creates a copy that has been transformed with a 1.8° rotation. Select this new line and hit (**Cmd/Ctrl + D**) repeatedly to run the 'Transform Again' function until you have made a complete circle.

STEP 05 Ensure that all the contents of both layers are centred on the document, and that the lines from the second layer all overlap outside of the document edge. Hit Select All (**Cmd/Ctrl + A**) and make sure the Line and Fill properties of all objects are transparent.





STEP 06 You will need to use the Divide function from the Pathfinder tool (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + F9**) to divide up where these objects cross over. When you are doing more complicated dividing, it's worth noting that the Pathfinder window has a dialog that allows you to change the level of precision and removal of redundant points.

SCALE IT UP

If you don't want a white block in the middle section, experiment with increasing the 98% scale amount to one that fits the centre of the design better.

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 45 minutes

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS5, InDesign CS5

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

FOLLOW THE SCRIPT

Like many Creative Suite 5 applications, Illustrator is heavily scriptable – but creating scripts can seem daunting to the novice. Here I'll take you line by line through the script we're using in this tutorial, to help understand how it works. You can find the script *Random_Fill_With_Swatch_Time_Curve.jsx* in our Download Zone, and view it in any text editor.

if (app.documents.length > 0 && app.activeDocument.pathItems.length > 0){
This is a standard line you would use to kick off most scripts. It's needed to simply check to see that there is a document open and that at least one pathItem is selected.

thisDoc = app.activeDocument;
This assigns a variable (thisDoc) to the active document, which is used as a shortcut name later on.

for (i = 0; i < thisDoc.selection.length; i++){
This is a looping FOR statement, which we will use to cycle through all selected objects.

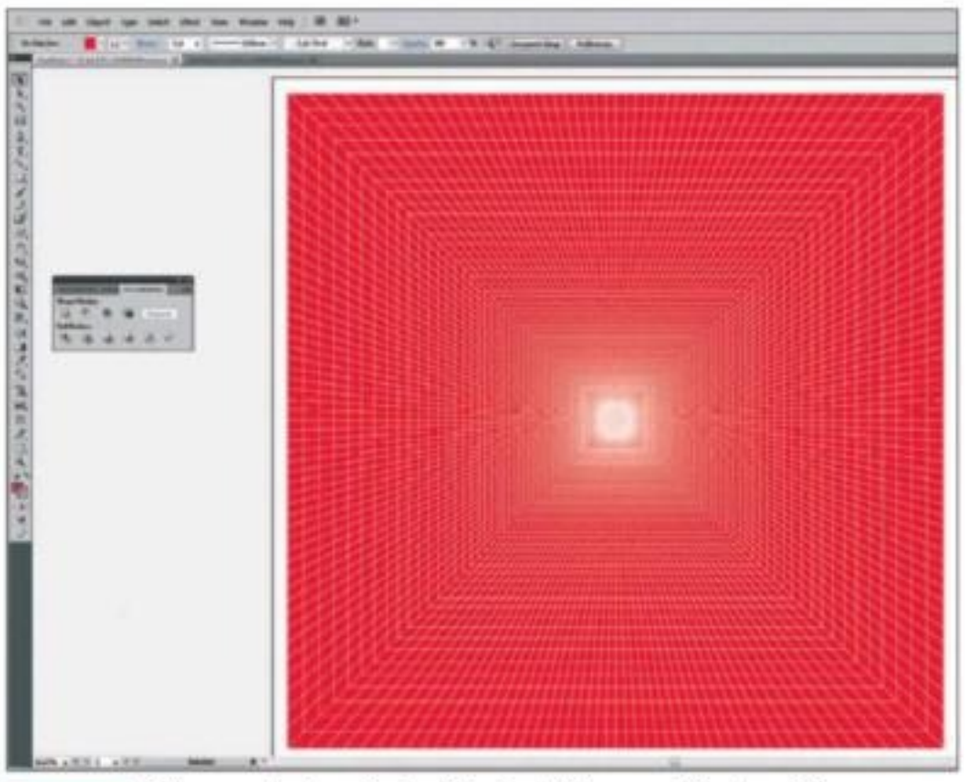
selectedObject=thisDoc.selection[i];
This will assign an array for each object.

if(selectedObject.typename=="PathItem" && selectedObject.closed==true){
This is another standard line of error checking which is used to simply check for the correct class name and that it is a closed path which can be filled.

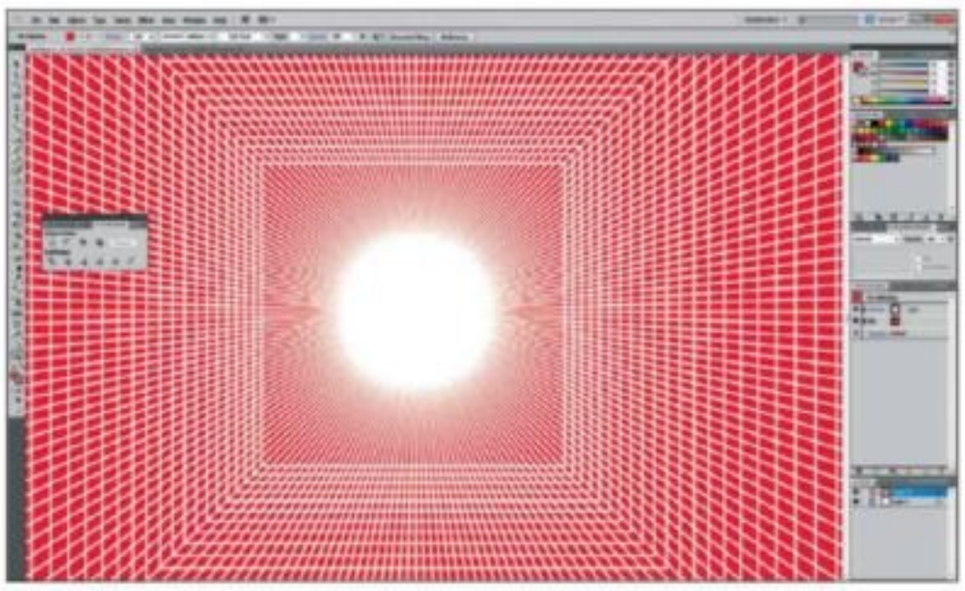
selectedObject.filled = true;
Set fill settings as TRUE
swatchIndex = Math.round((thisDoc.swatches.length - 3) * Math.random() + 2);
This is a random number generator. The numbers correspond to swatches. It also removes 0 and 1 from the possible random numbers generated, as these are default black and white swatches that we don't want to use.

selectedObject.fillColor = thisDoc.swatches[swatchIndex].color;
This then applies the random swatch colour from the corresponding number to the object.

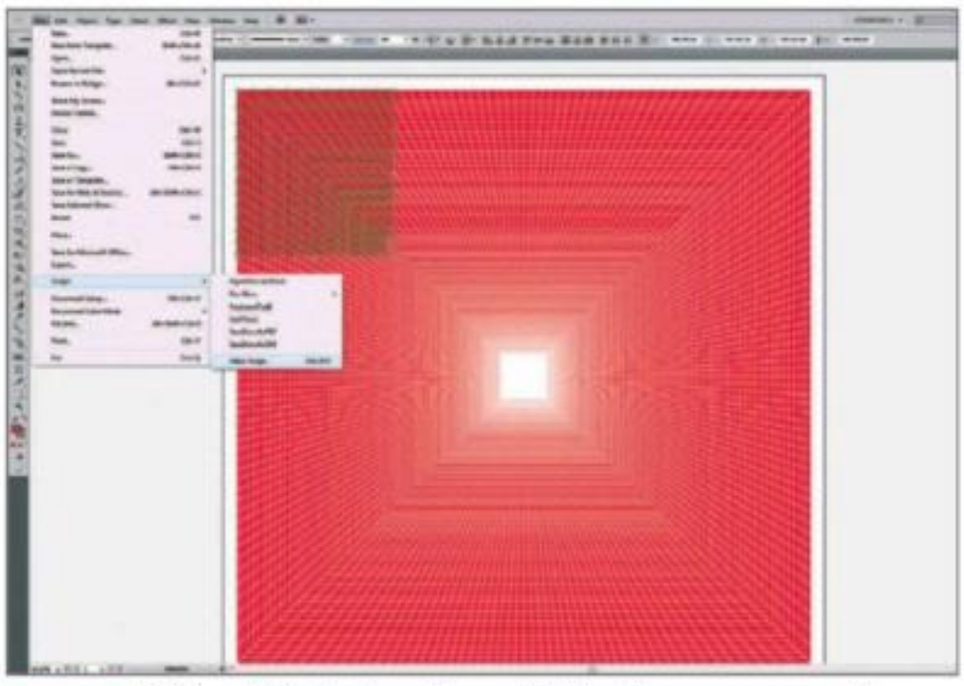
```
        }
    }
}
```
These close off the FOR and IF statements we have added above.



STEP 07 The next step is to fill all of these objects with a seemingly random pattern of colours. Doing this with the current framework will end up with a bunch of irregular shapes in centre of the design that don't match. For the cleanest look, remove these by selecting them from the centre and deleting.

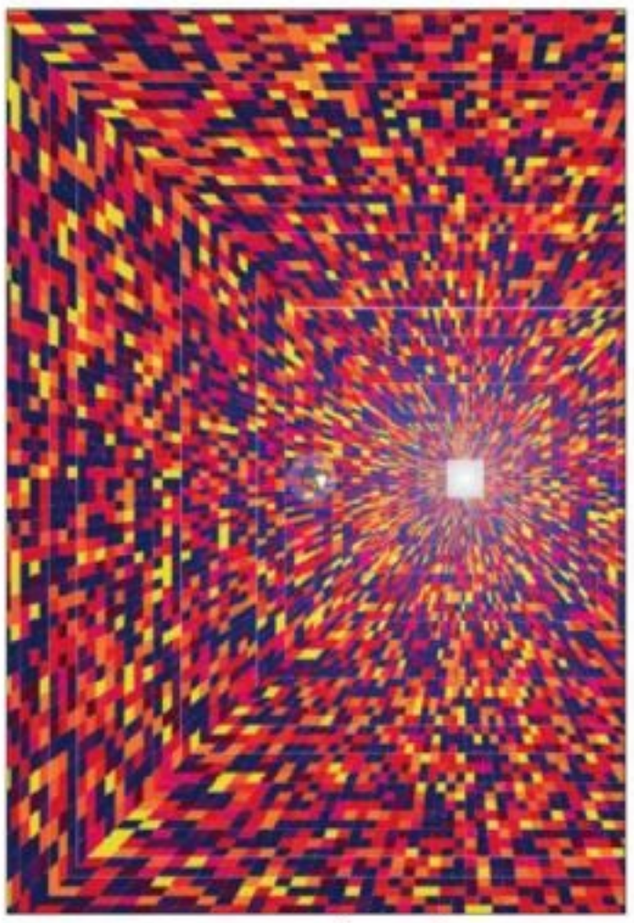


STEP 08 Now that the centre is removed we can get on with painting all the thousands of elements randomly, with a set of colours based on a swatch. Here I am using a palette of purple, pink, red, orange and yellow.



STEP 09 Doing this by hand would take hours or even days, but using Illustrator's scripting capabilities we can reduce this to mere minutes. Select all the objects and then select **File > Scripting > Other Script** and load *Random_Fill_With_Swatch_Time_Curve.jsx*. If you have a high-end desktop this will take a few minutes to execute. However, if you are running this on a laptop, simply select just a few objects at a time and run the script on each in turn to complete the entire set of objects. To learn how this script works, see **Follow the script** (left). To finish off the design, select all and give it a 0.5pt white border line – and there you have it.

STEP 10 We now want to turn this piece of art into an A2 poster print. Open InDesign CS5 and create a new document with the dimensions of our output size – in our case 360 (width) x 554 (depth), ready to be produced in sheets and cut to size at our print house. Leave the other settings as they are.



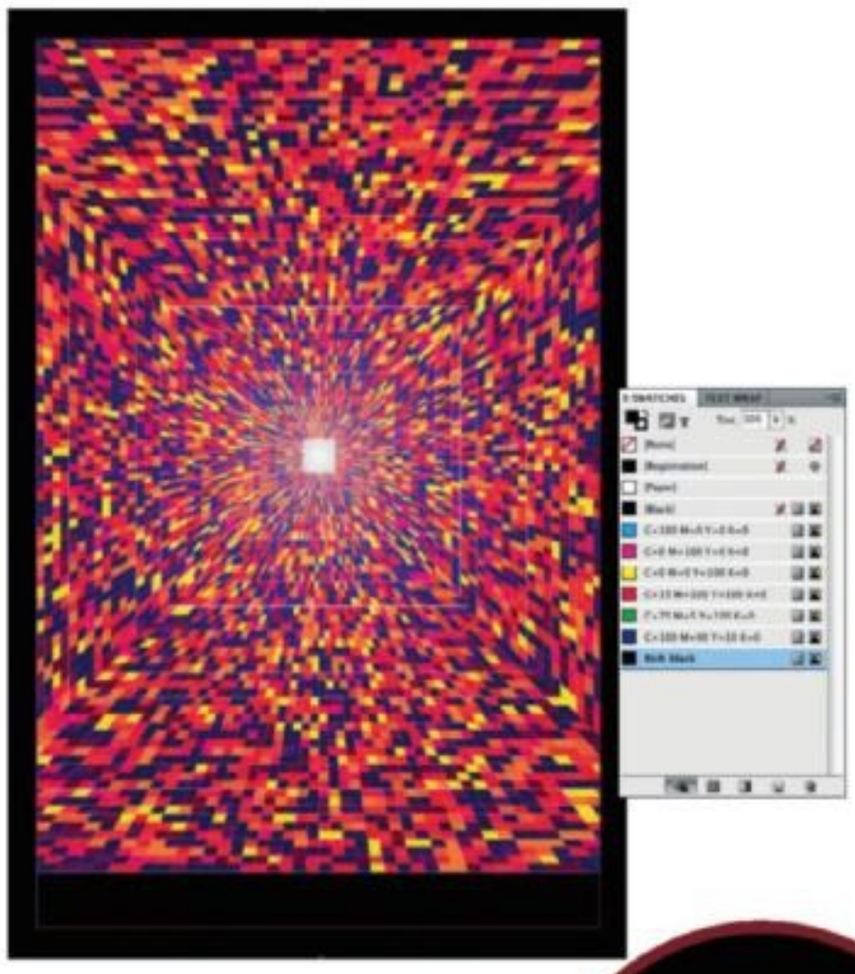
STEP 11 Draw out a frame from the top left margin corner across and down towards the bottom of the right margin, leaving space between the bottom of the frame and the bottom margin for our text. Ours is 334.427 x 495.017mm.

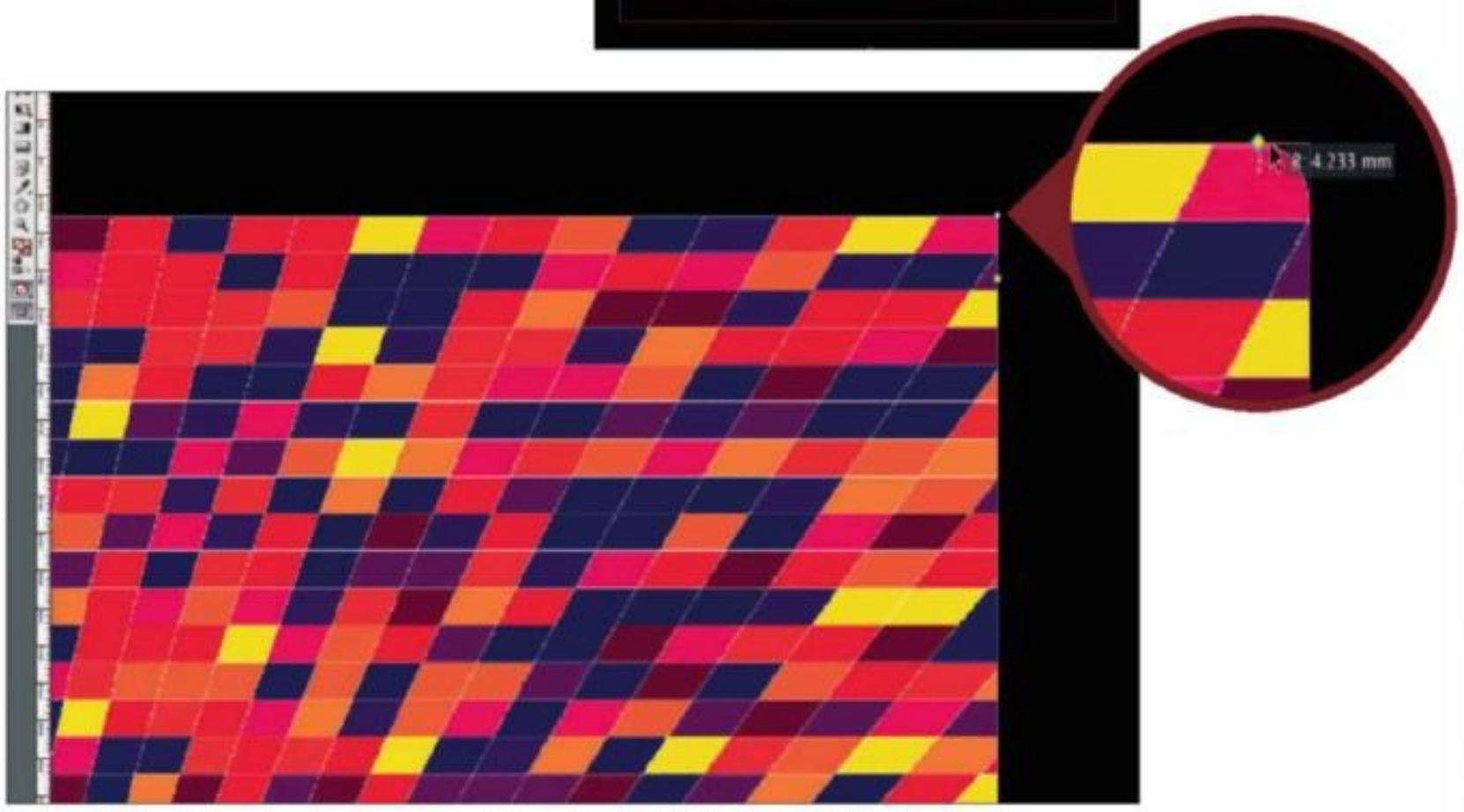
Select **File > Place** (or **Cmd/Ctrl + D**) and select your artwork. As the artwork is square and this is a portrait poster, we'll need to crop some off while still maintaining its symmetrical structure. First, right-click on the image and select **Fitting > Fill Frame Proportionally**.

Move your mouse over the image, and a semi-transparent doughnut will appear. This is the new Content Grabber, which allows you to do many of the functions of the Direct Selection Tool using the standard Selection Tool. Hold **Shift** to allow movement in only one direction, grab the doughnut and drag to the left so the images moves within the frame. Move it until the pink vertical line tells you it's in the centre.

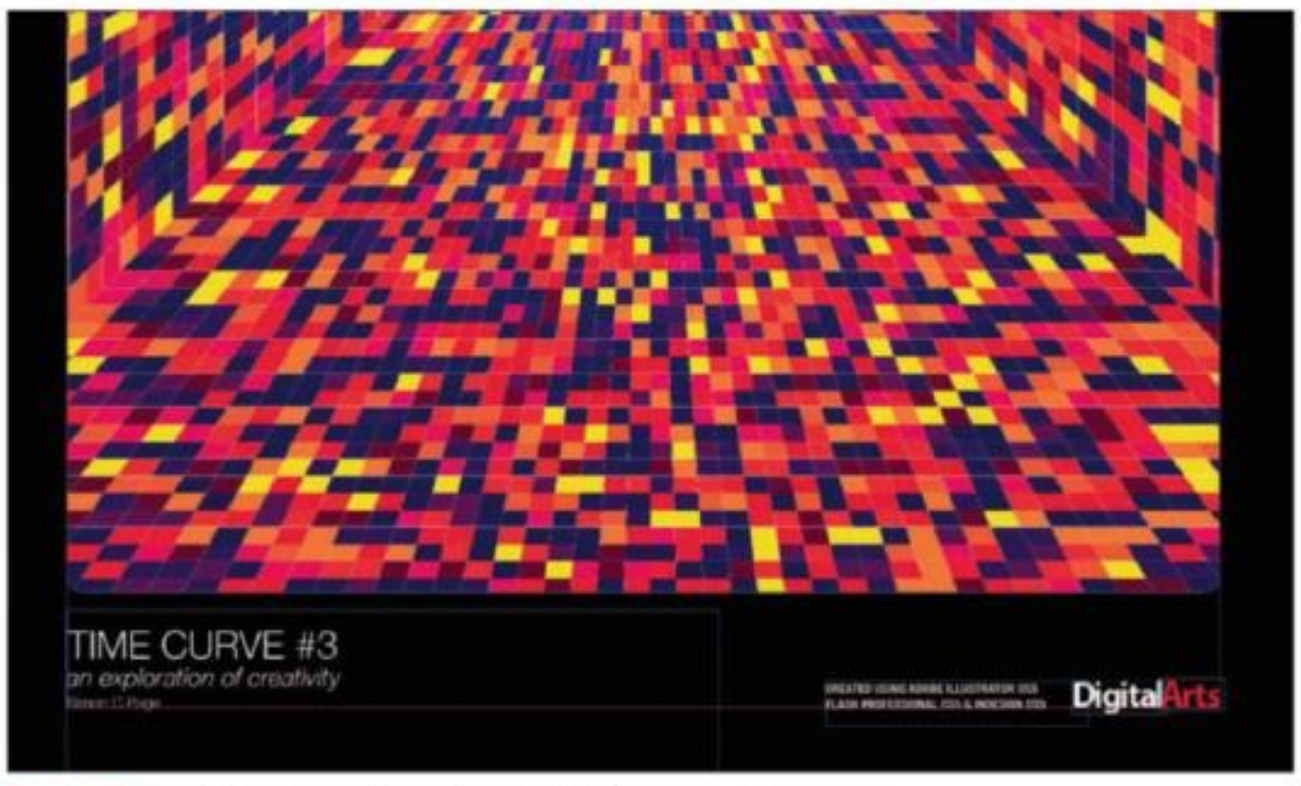
STEP 12 The artwork would look better against black, so draw out a text frame that extends beyond the document frame (to allow for bleed) and fill it with a rich black (C40, M40, Y40 and K100). We could put this in the back using **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + [**, but it's time to check out InDesign CS5's new Photoshop-style Layers palette. Each object becomes a sub-layer, so it's best to learn how to use this with only a few layers.

Select the Layers panel (**F7**) and open Layer 1. Click on the *<text frame>* layer, click again and change its name to *Black Background*. Drag this layer below the main artwork.





STEP 13 To give this a look drawn from classic 1950s and 1960s book covers, we're breaking out the rounded corners. Zoom so you can see the top right corner close up. Select the main artwork and click on the yellow box on the right of the frame. This opens up the corners for editing. Grab the yellow triangle that's appeared on the top of the frame and drag it to the left to curve the corner. Pull it out to 4.233mm. This affects all corners – if you want to affect just one, hold down **Shift** when dragging.



STEP 14 To add more of book-cover influence, add some measured typography in the space at the bottom to complete its stylish appearance. ■

PROFILE SIMON C PAGE

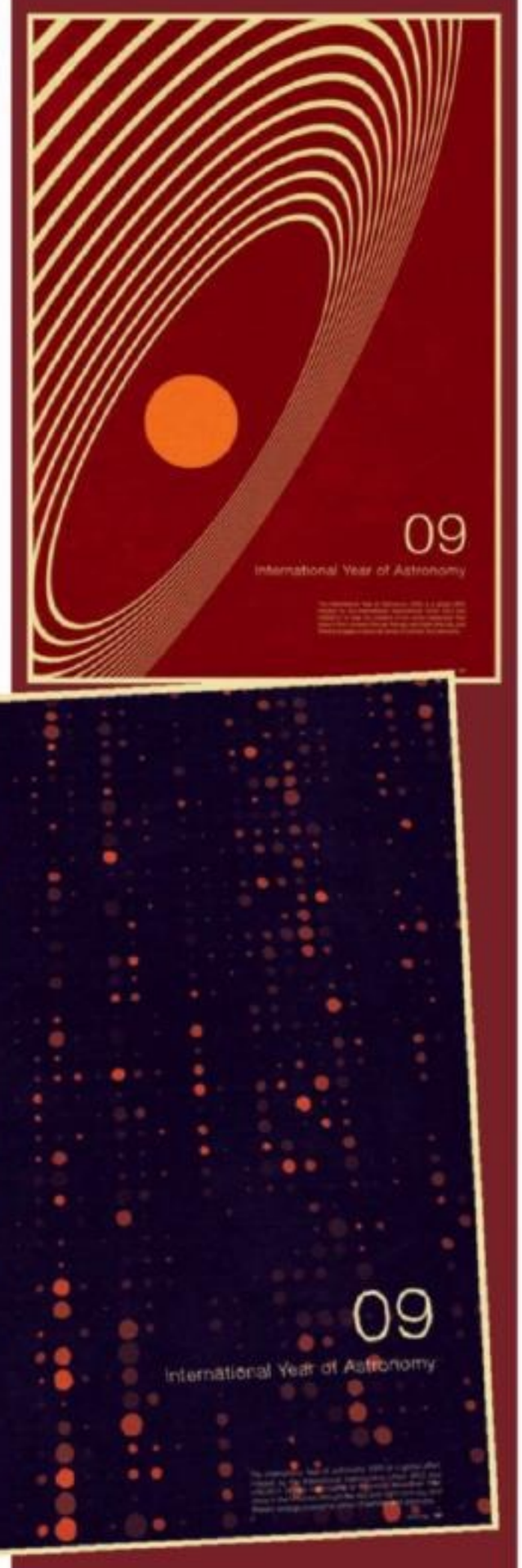
Simon C Page is a self-taught graphic designer from the UK. He loves many aspects of design but his main passions are typography art, illustration and geometric design.

"I would find it hard to choose a favourite," he says "and often I will try and combine these creative fields in to my design work."

Simon likes his work to evolve naturally and not stay too static. He often challenges myself with new self-initiated works for his website, regularly showing variations in his creative process.

CONTACT

- *simoncpage.co.uk*



Two posters created for last year's International Year of Astronomy.

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

› INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 6 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

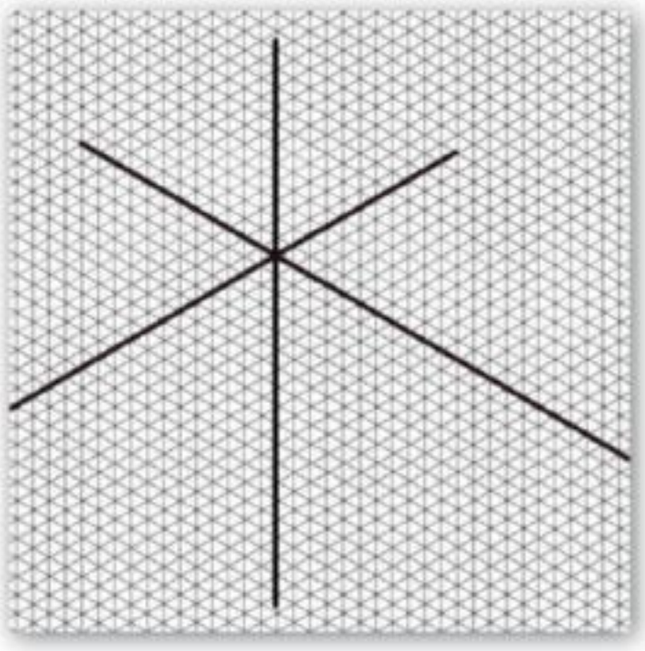
> **LEARN** TILING TECHNIQUES

Build an entire city out of tiled elements

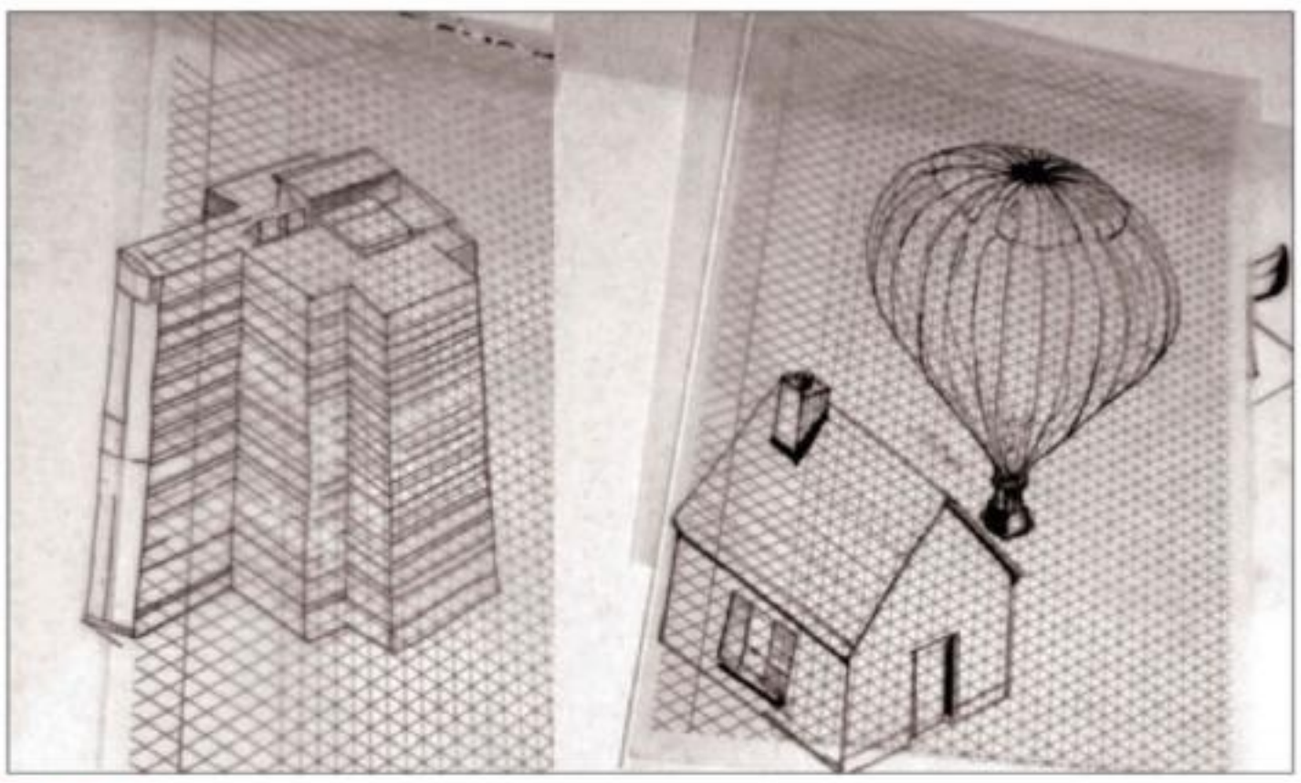
You can easily combine isometrically drawn objects with repeat tiling to create a complex cityscape, as **2xanadu** demonstrates

It was two years ago that the design agency 2xanadu used an isometric grid to create a repeat pattern for a bike frame made by Hong Kong company Luma. Now they've repeated the trick to create the city on the left, which will appear on Luma cycling apparel and gear.

Isometric grids are a great way to achieve a 3D/2D look. Couple them with a repeat pattern and you can achieve some striking effects.

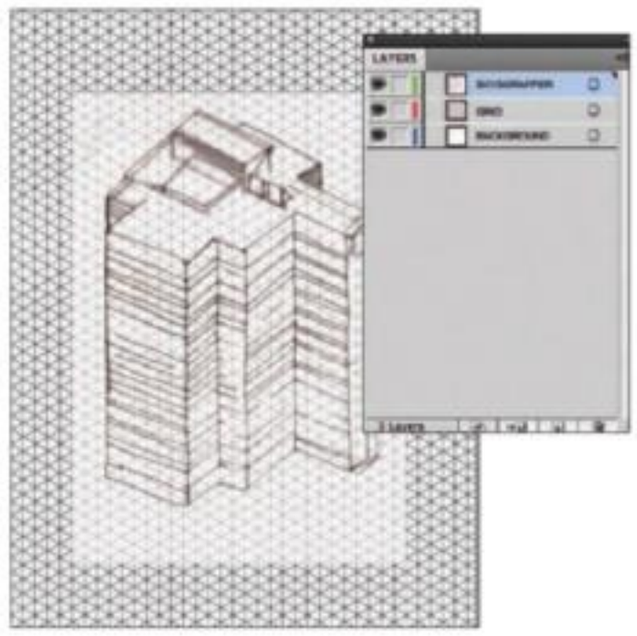


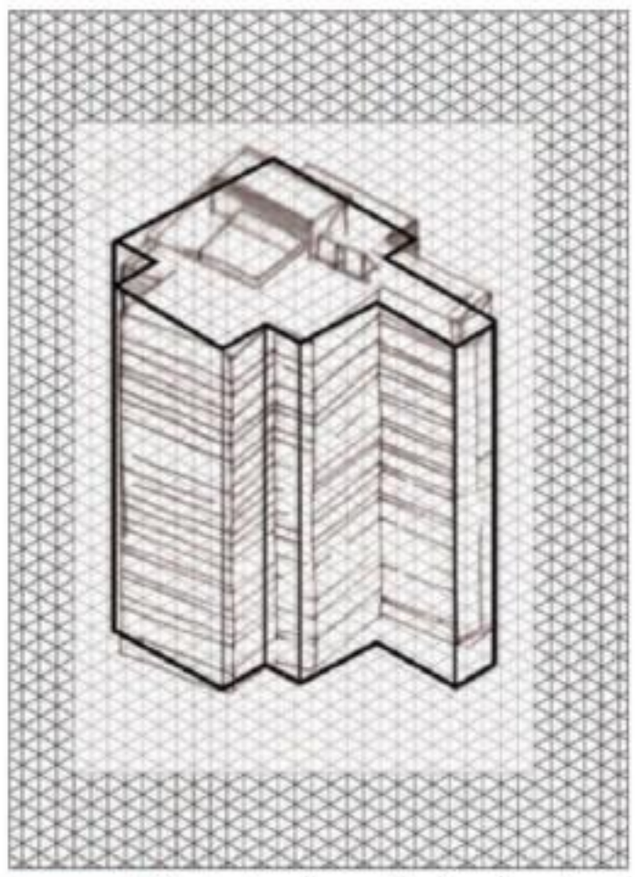
STEP 01 The isometric grid is a useful tool for drawing objects in perspective. It's formed of vertical lines plus lines at 60° to either side, all meeting at common points to form a web of equilateral triangles (*right*). We've provided one in the project files – an Illustrator document named *Grid.ai*.



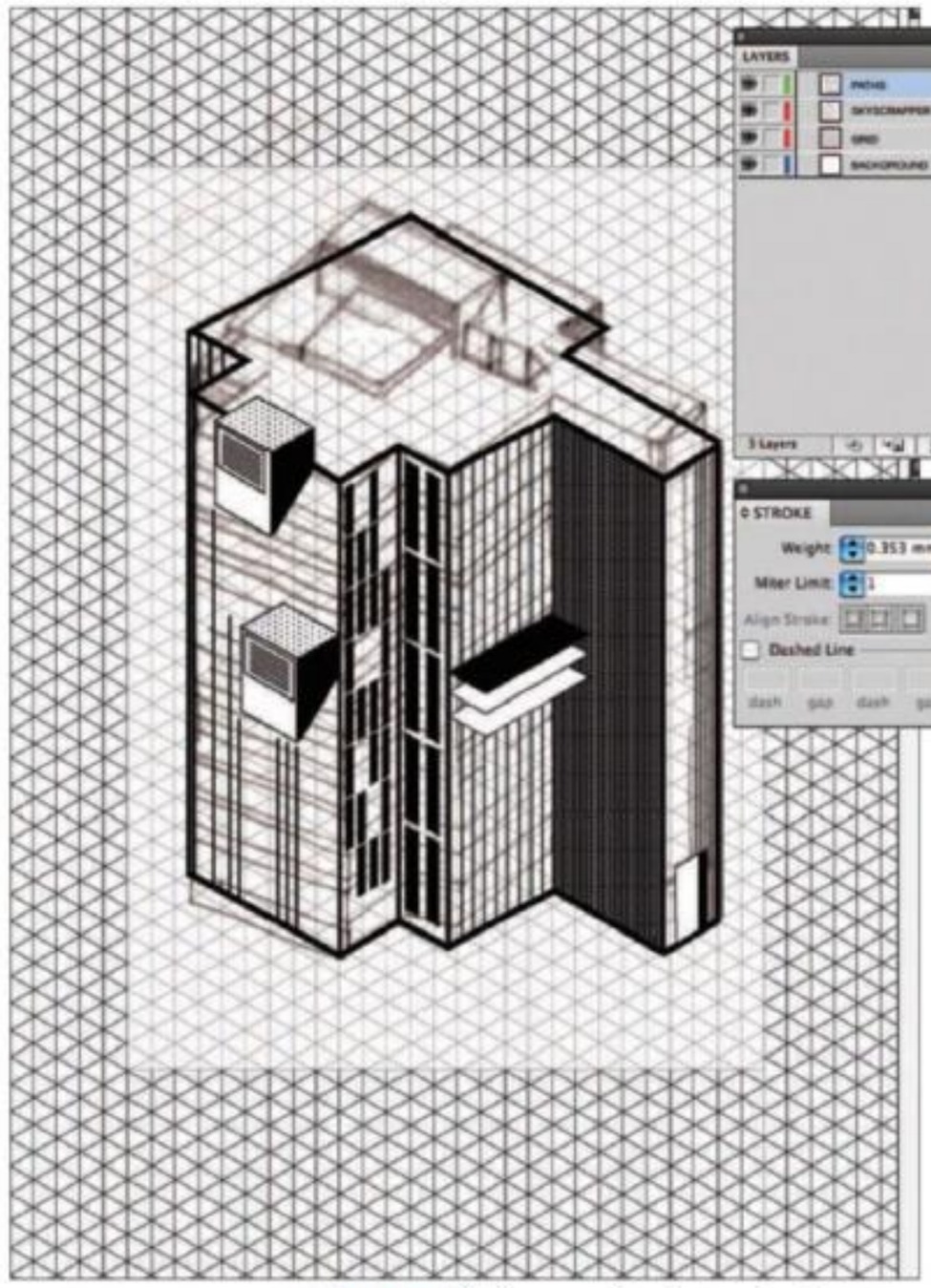
STEP 02 Like every great idea, our city begins in the sketchbook or layout pad, with a printout of the grid under the top sheet. Sketch some elements and scan them in.

STEP 03 Import the grid into a new Illustrator document and lock the layer. Now place one of your scans over it in a separate layer and set the opacity to 70%, so that the grid can be seen underneath.

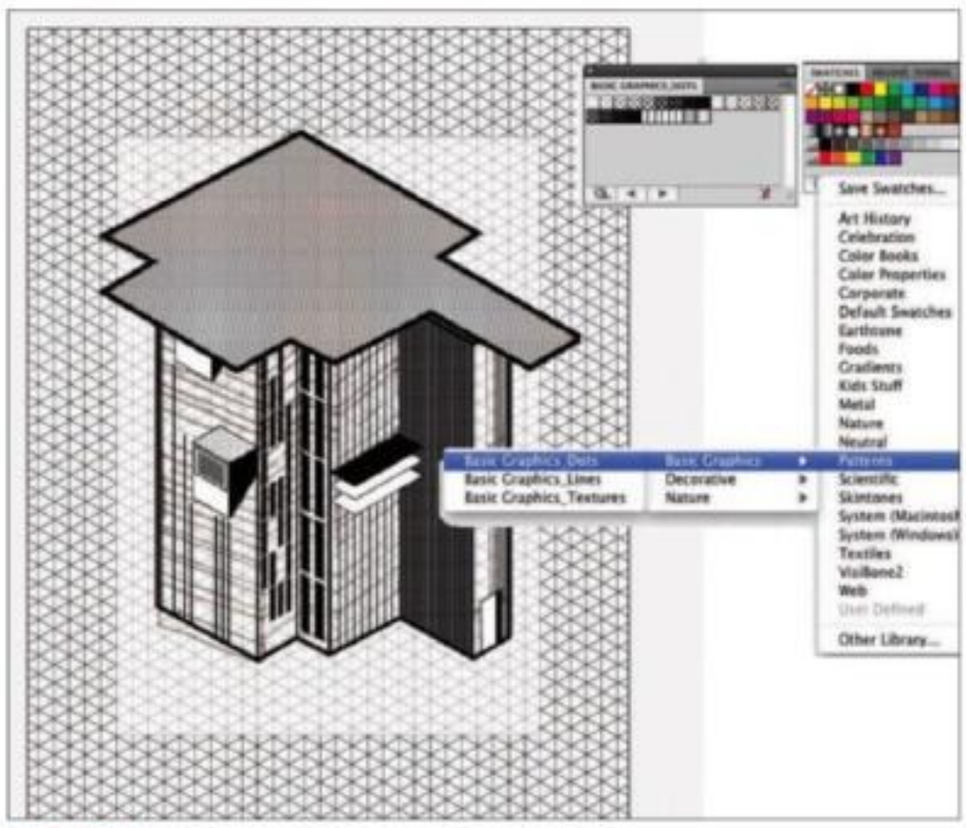




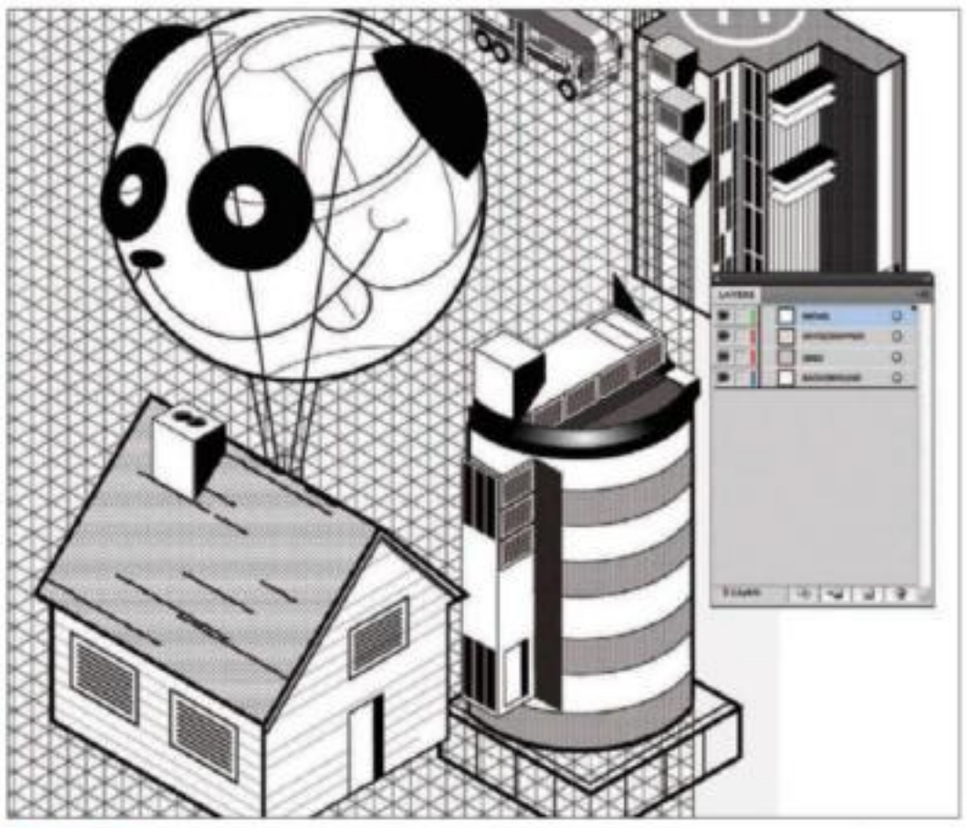
STEP 04 Start drawing with the Pen tool (**P**). Join all paths up – there should be no overhanging bits. Keep it clean and use the grid to achieve straight lines at 30° to the horizontal.



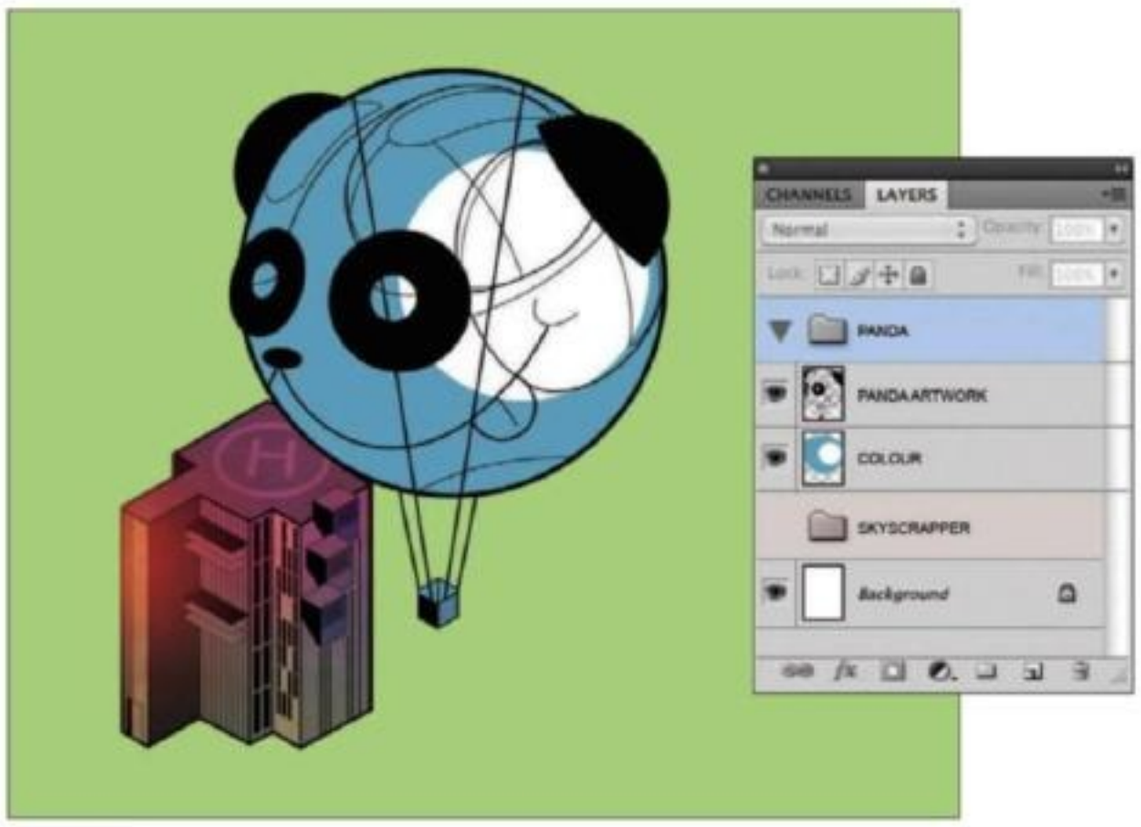
STEP 05 When you're done, start adding some fine details. Remember that this will be a repeat pattern and that it will be a small part of a much bigger canvas, so you don't need to go mad. Just use different weights of stroke and simple shapes to create depth and detail.



06 We want the overall look to be sharp and very graphic, so use the built-in halftone black-and-white swatches (accessed from the Swatch panel or using **Window > Swatch Libraries > Patterns > Basic Graphics**).



07 Once you're happy with all your elements, make sure they're grouped individually, then copy each one and paste it into Photoshop.

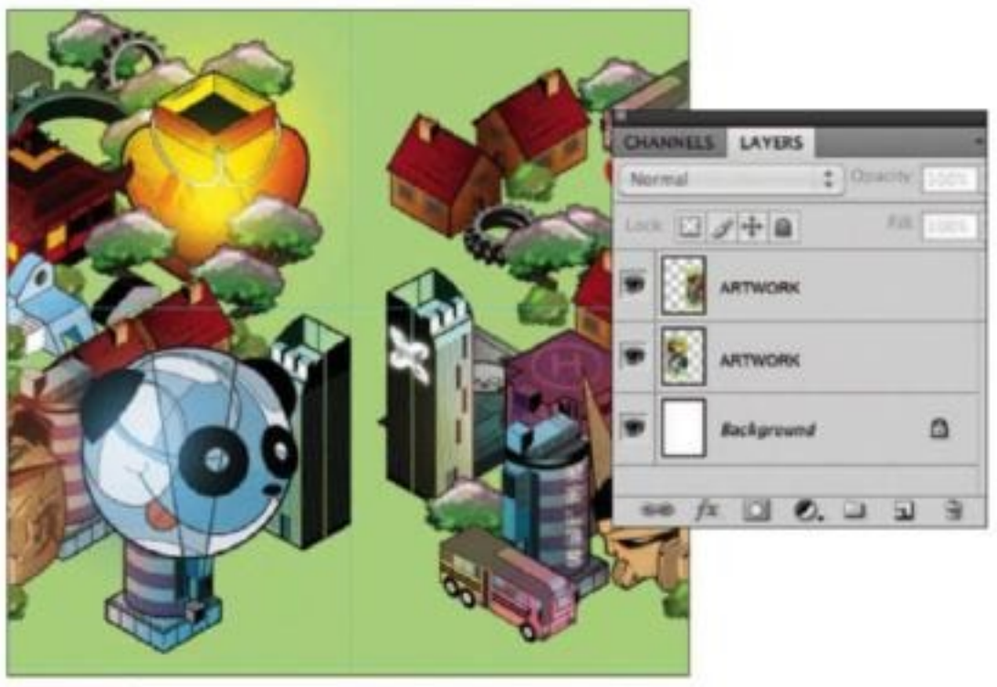


08 In Photoshop, put each element in its own layer group. Within each group, create a new layer beneath the element and call it 'Colour'. Set the element layer's blending mode to Multiply, then go to the Colour layer and start colouring it in.

INTRIGUINGLY RANDOM

When you've practically finished building your cityscape, try scattering a few extra objects about the pattern to create a more intricate and intriguing look.

09 Once all your elements are finished, start composing the central part of your cityscape. When you're happy with your work, go to **Layer > Flatten image**.



10 Now slice the image into two from top to bottom. Move the left half to the far right of the document, and the right half to the far left.

11 Slice the image into two from left to right this time. Put the bottom half up against the top of the document, and move the top half down to the bottom.

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STEP 12 You will be left with a space in the centre. Fill it in with the rest of your elements, but don't go over the edges of the empty space, or you'll compromise the repeat pattern which you'll create in Step 14.

STEP 13 Flatten the image again and tweak the overall look using **Image > Adjustments > Levels**. Now paint a neon-glow look over certain areas with a soft brush at 70% opacity and the mode set to Screen.

STEP 14 Flatten the image again. Now select all and copy and paste, and start creating your tiling.

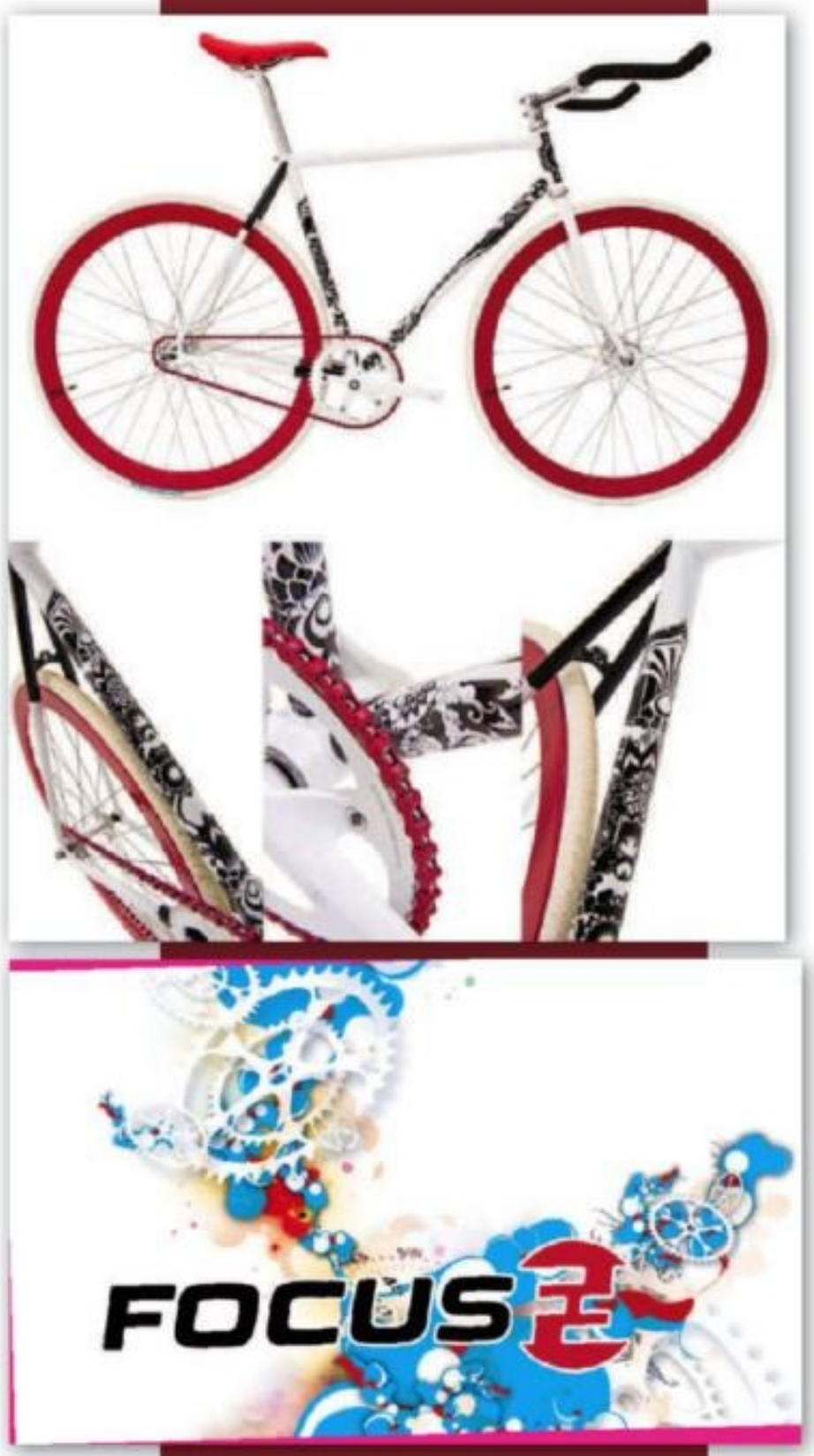
STEP 15 To give the pattern a more random feel, we've actually used four tiles with some small variations – we've moved buildings around, added stuff and taken stuff away. This yields a more diverse and arresting look than a strict repetition of the pattern. Finally, we boosted the brightness to improve its impact. ■

PROFILE 2XANADU

Based in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, the team at 2xanadu describe themselves as "a young, full service creative agency who instigate and facilitate innovative art and design projects across the globe". Their client list has included Jimmy Choo Couture, Focus Bikes, Luma and United Business Media.

CONTACT

- *2xanadu.com*



Above top Peter Lin of 2xanadu blended Eastern and Western influences to design the graphics on this bike frame.

Above Focus Bikes commissioned this design, in the colours of German professional cycling team Milram, for their Hong Kong showroom.

CHAPTER 7

TYPE ART

TURN LETTERFORMS INTO
STUNNING ILLUSTRATIONS

WORDS GRAEME AYMER

TYPE NOW

Creatives are putting elaborate lettering at the heart of illustrations. Welcome to the new wave of type-based art

It's hard to miss the current vogue for illustration-based ads and other projects – but even more noticeable at the moment is a trend for putting text front and centre, integrating it into the very fabric of the image in detailed, elaborate artworks.

Advertisers have largely led the trend, first by embracing illustration as a handy way of helping a sceptical public rekindle its love affairs with their products when photos just make the public even more dubious.

Illustration helps some advertisers dodge regulators and ease the responses of a critical public. For instance, in 2005, guidelines for advertising alcohol in the UK changed, and it became impossible to show sexy people having a good time while drinking alcohol. How do you make your brand fun without showing people having fun while using it? Stella Artois went with a well-received illustration-based campaign for its beers.

Mid-decade, faced with a public that was increasingly anti-junk food and anti-corporate, Coca-Cola turned to illustration for its 'The Coke Side of Life' campaign. And of course, where the big junk food and alcohol brands lead, the rest follow.

Once advertisers had embraced illustration as a mainstream strategy, it was a relatively short leap to illustration-based type. Look at AMV BBDO's bold ads for *The Economist*, or Alex Trochut's recent work for beer brand Estrella Damm. In these campaigns, the words aren't separate from the image. They are the image, or at least an essential element of it.

Why words?

The shift to type-based art is partly a way of keeping illustration-led ads fresh. Technology has a part to play, too: try using your old G4 PowerBook to do some of the serious heavy lifting you now do on your MacBook Pro.

Most obviously, though, it offers a way for advertisers to marry a clear verbal message and an illustration, presenting a slogan or message in a more intriguing and engaging manner than straight-up text.

Letters are often mashed up and mixed up, glooped up and obscured. Rendered large, for example on a large-scale poster at a train platform, they invite the viewer to engage with the illustration – and its message. On a magazine cover or CD poster, the effect is the same.

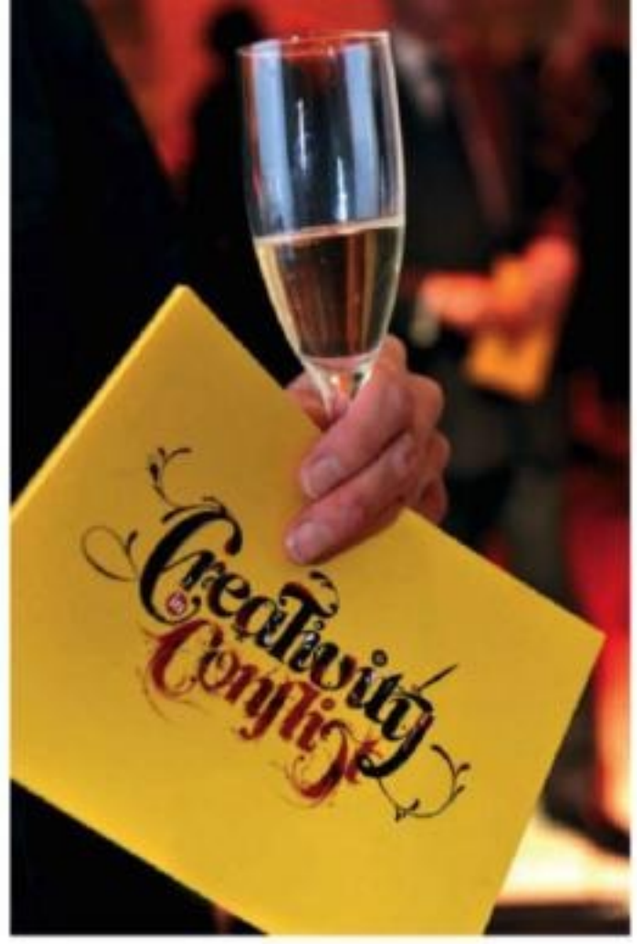
"Type-based art presents a slogan or message in a more engaging way than straight-up text"

Type-based art is also a fantastic way to make a message unique. You can use customised or one-off fonts – this is a particularly handy connotation for brands whose message rests on customisation and tailored solutions for clients, such as mobile phone service providers.

Typographic illustration is full of potential for graphic designers, then – but it's a "double-edged sword", according to designer Craig Ward. "For one, you're restricted by the fact you have to use type – but then, conversely, that's

Top and **right** AMV/BBDO's ads for *The Economist* by Craig Ward (top) and Non Format (right) integrate the message into images with trademark wit.

Far right *Diagonal*, by Alex Trochut.



no more restricting than a brief coming in saying 'we need a picture of a guy sat at a desk'," Ward explains. "It's just something else as a subject matter and it can be embellished in any way you like. That for me is the most appealing thing: that [with typographic illustration] I'm not tied to any one particular style."

In fact, that restriction is its charm. Illustrating with type enables you to push the envelope, to distort and twist letterforms beyond what you can do in terms of traditional typography. Yet an A still has to look like an A, and a B, a B. That's a fascinating conundrum for many creatives.

> "The vast majority of clients are too interested in legibility. People find it interesting to figure it out"
>
> Marian Bantjes

But just how much like an A does an A have to look? "The vast majority of clients are far too interested in exact legibility," says Canadian designer Marian Bantjes (*bantjes.com*). "I think people find it interesting to see something that's intriguing. It's debatable whether there's an advantage to being able to read, 'Sale On Washing Machines $999!' in Helvetica or having to figure that out."

Below Seb Lester has moved from lettering design into type-based art, creating pieces including this editorial design for *Wired* (**left**) and a series of limited-edition prints (**right**).

"I'm a commercial artist," counters London-based Radim Malinic, who designs as Brand Nu (*brandnu.co.uk*). "Legibility in a commercial project is the main point. If the client doesn't read it, the customer doesn't read it and there's no point in doing it."

"I think it depends on the application," argues Barcelona-based designer Alex Trochut, currently the poster boy for lettering-based illustration. "If you're designing a billboard, people will only have a second to read it. If you have a record cover that people could spend time with, you can be less readable."

Your clients will probably influence where you stand on the debate. But be clear on one thing: without a clear voice, a creative vision, and something interesting to say creatively, you'll be little more than an also-ran. Beware of what Marian Bantjes calls "ornament barf".

Above London designer Radim Malinic of Brand Nu created the branding for the Creativity in Conflict student competition.

"I'm less concerned with some shaky kerning than I am with the fact that there's a hundred or more designers out there just trying to out-Trochut Alex Trochut," says Craig Ward, when asked about the style's danger zones. "Even he would concede that his work doesn't apply to everything and – more – that's just one small facet of his style."

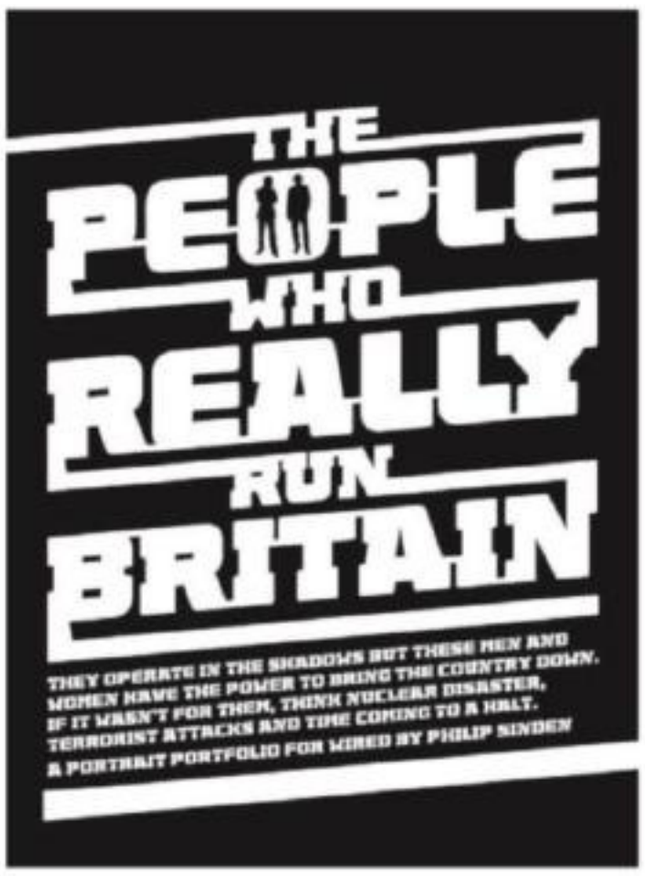
Getting started

Do you need to master font-design to dabble in type-based art? Not necessarily. Alex Trochut readily admits his own font, Neo Deco, features little in the way of kerning. Similarly, Radim Malinic is not a typeface designer. Others, such as London's Seb Lester or Brooklyn's Jessica Hische, almost always create their own lettering – but then, they're both experienced typographers.

It's more important to take the time to understand how type works, both in terms of white space and letter proportion. Check out a few books, such as Wilson Harvey's *1000 Type Treatments*, or *Type: v. 2: A Visual History of Typefaces and Graphic Styles* by Alston Purvis and Cees de Jong.

Popular tastes change over time: flares get replaced by skinny jeans, which get replaced by flares again. Clients may decide that typographic illustration is no longer 'in' over the next few years. However, working with letters will always remain creatively satisfying and interesting.

As Seb Lester remarks: "There's a whole wealth of untapped typographic styles that you can draw from – and a rich legacy of over 2,000 years of Latin lettering styles for inspiration." ■


THE
PEOPLE
WHO
REALLY
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THEY OPERATE IN THE SHADOWS BUT THESE MEN AND
WOMEN HAVE THE POWER TO BRING THE COUNTRY DOWN.
IF IT WASN'T FOR THEM, THINK NUCLEAR DISASTER,
TERRORIST ATTACKS AND TIME COMING TO A HALT.
A PORTRAIT PORTFOLIO FOR WIRED BY PHILIP SINDEN

The one that got away

HIRSUTURA

> Craig Ward's ambitious typography project for the New York Art Directors Club took some unexpected directions.

Former Londoner Craig Ward has **amassed an** eye-grabbing portfolio **of** type-based illustration for the likes of **BMW, the *Economist*** and Nike. Online, he's better known as **Words** Are Pictures, but in the real world, he's a senior designer and typographer at New York studio Grey.

One of his most ambitious projects was for the Art Directors Club of New York, for whom he designed its Young Guns 7 logo for 2009's recipients of the prestigious award. "Of course they had no money, but the scale of the project really appealed to me so I took it on," he explains. "Basically they wanted a logo that incorporated the letters A, D and C, Young Guns, the number 7 and a cube – a reference to the award you get."

Ward and the Art Directors Club agreed on the idea of Chinese tangrams – ancient geometric puzzles – that could be reordered into the required figures, with Craig even designing a typeface around the idea. With a view to animating the figures in 3D, Craig went as far as learning Cinema 4D, and even an iPhone app was mooted.

However, things didn't quite pan out that way. The scope of the ideas far exceeded the budget, so the idea ended up as one element of the overall publicity campaign. Despite this, the project shows that typographic illustration can be ambitious, moving far beyond the idea of just ornamenting letterforms.

"I was definitely trying to do something different for this project, so they really got the works," he says. "I did a custom font, used colours that were nothing like anything else I've done. The typeface was created specifically for the piece and drawn around the grid I created for the tangram itself."

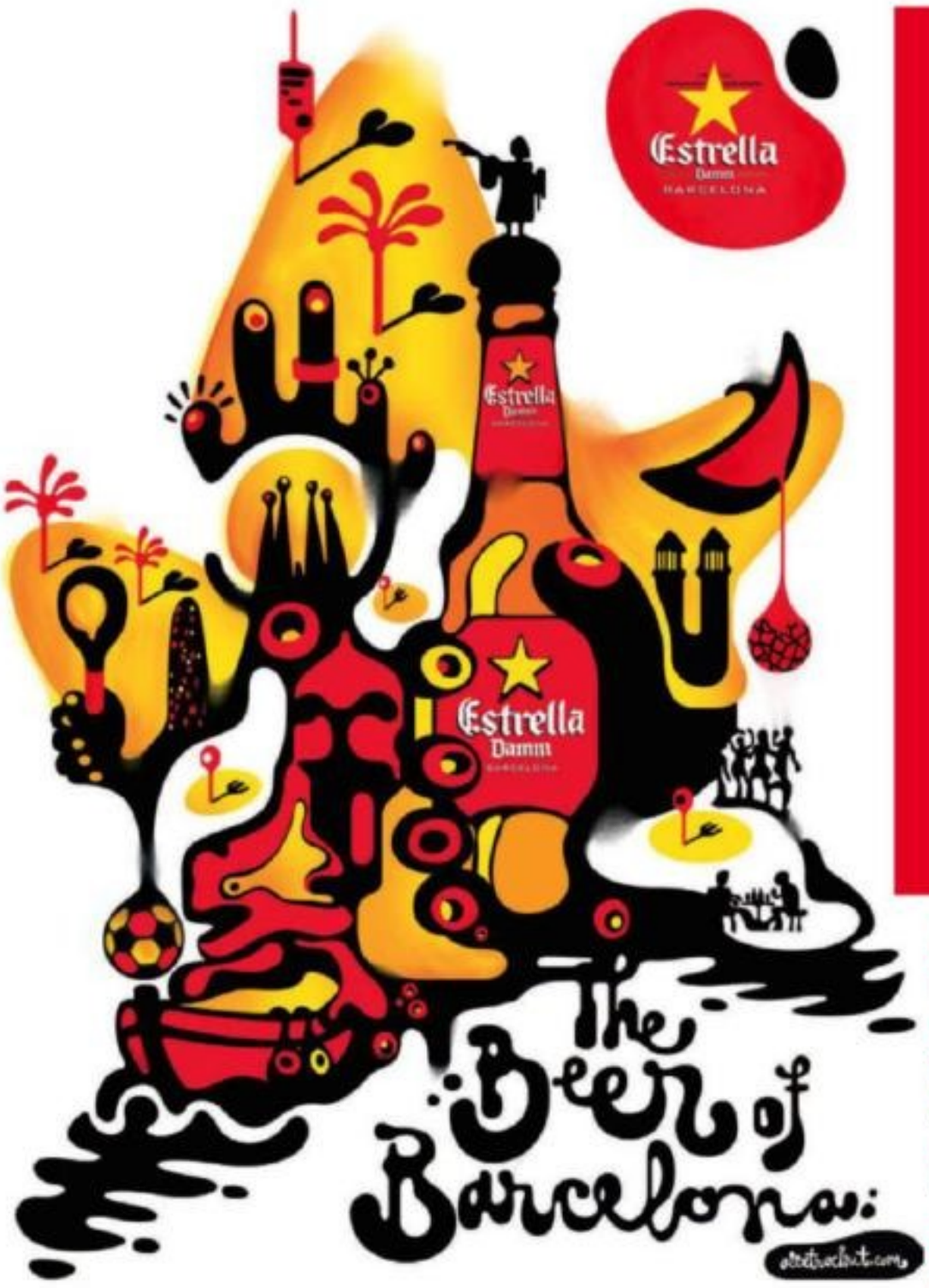
wordsarepictures.co.uk

"The typeface was created specifically for the ADC piece"

Craig Ward

Top The Hirsutura typeface was created for a personal project.

Above right and far right Letterforms and artworks created for the Art Directors Club of New York.



Left Trochut's Barcelona-inspired Estrella Dam poster.

Above A piece for If You Could exhibition, answering the question, "if you could do anything in 2008, what would it be?"

Right Front and back (inset) covers for *Varoom*.

Letters that sink in

> Alex Trochut's liquid type added va-va-voom to London art journal *Varoom*.

For a long time Alex Trochut's designs for Barcelona beer brand Estrella Damm were regular sights on billboards in British cities, and for many creatives, particularly type-based artists, he is quite simply 'the man'.

He describes his Estrella posters, the illustrated shapes and their featured letter forms as being influenced by Barcelona – its atmosphere, its fantastical architecture and a vibrant artistic legacy left by Gaudí, Miró and Dalí, among others.

Trochut's work for London art title *Varoom* caught our eye. The magazine commissioned him to create an illustration-based cover for its November 2009 issue. Art-directed by Non Format, the idea was to create a two-part illustration (for both front and back covers) in which the line 'This Is Illustration' would be written in liquid and gradually sink into another liquid.

"We wanted to make the liquid look as fluid as possible so it would look like a splash that was natural," Trochut explains.

"If you push to express yourself, you're forgetting how you communicate"

Alex Trochut

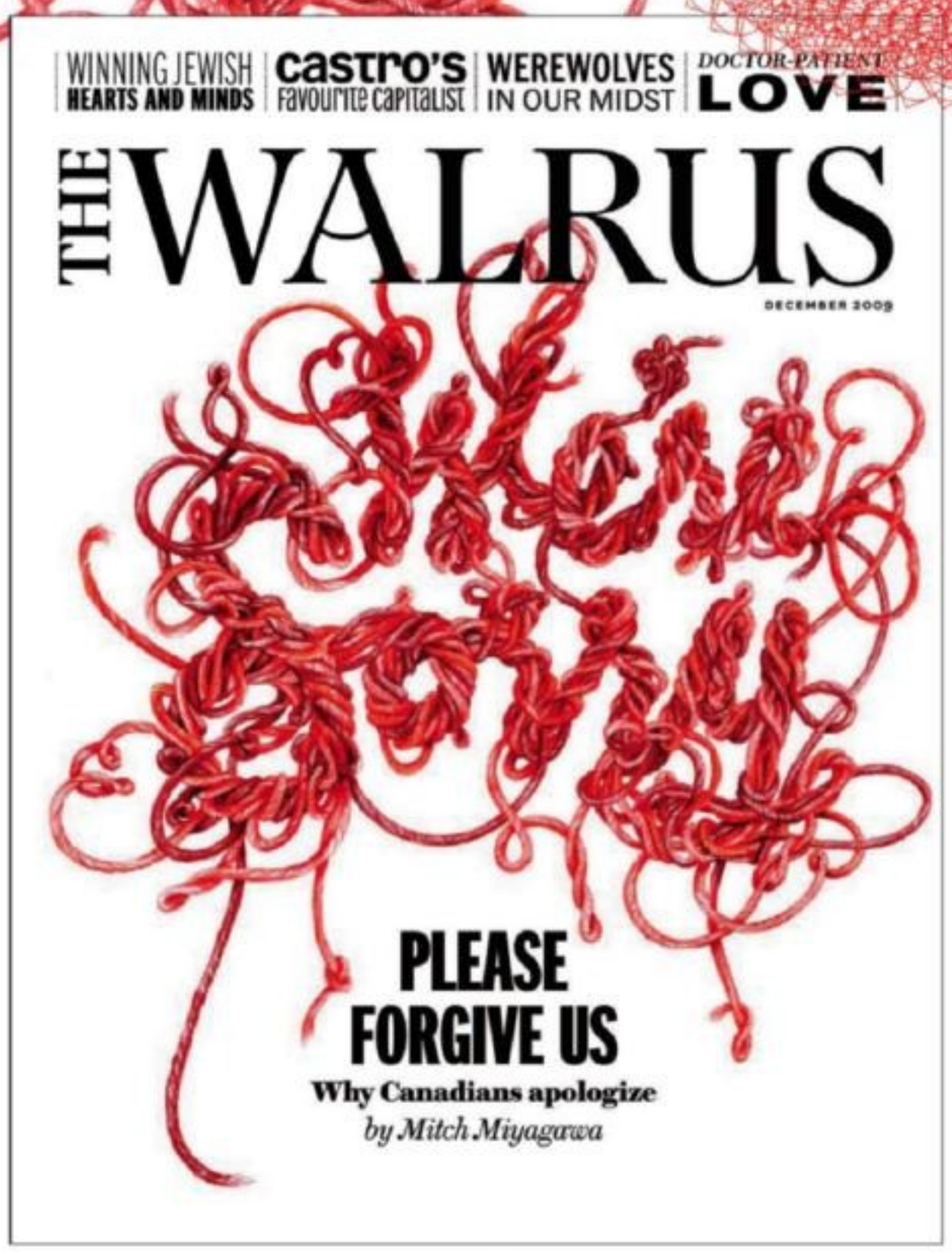
This gave him a lot of leeway for the letter design. The idea was to create something more illustration-based than typographical. Legibility wasn't a key concern. However, it was important that letters were in proportion, that they didn't look 'wrong'. Therefore he looked at flowing type, such as the font Candy, as well as lettering from the 1970s for an understanding of the necessary strokes necessary for the right look.

For Trochut, this proportionality is vital. "It's like a hydraulic system: if you push a lot to express yourself, then you're forgetting the way you communicate," he says. "Everybody will see how beautiful the shapes can be, but maybe just a few people will be able to read it. It's important to find that middle point, where you can be as expressive as you want and most people can read it, too."

alextrochut.com

Tied up in knots

> Marian Bantjes tried to sneak snakes onto the cover of one of Canada's biggest magazines. The editor turned them into string.



Based in Canada, Marian Bantjes has **a client** list that includes Pentagram, Saks Fifth Avenue, FontShop and Houghton-Mifflin.

"If I was working more with character or regular illustration of images, I would be more forced to lock myself into some kind of recognisable style," she says. "I think that most known illustrators are known for their form and style of illustration.

"Because I'm not doing that, and I'm straddling these boundaries of illustration, typography and design, I'm able to really change the work that I'm doing, almost on a daily basis. I have a lot of freedom to explore whatever I'm interested in."

This doesn't mean she doesn't have to keep her clients happy, though. On a commission for *The Walrus*, one of Canada's most popular magazines, Bantjes became mischievously fixated on the idea of using snakes on the cover.

"I thought, it would really be great with snakes – and I really thought I was going to pull one over on them if they allowed me to do snakes," she explains. "I knew damn well that covers with snakes on them freak people out. And they almost went for it, but then they ran it by the editors and the editors said no. No snakes." Feigning outrage, she suggested kittens instead ("Kittens sell magazines!") with the kittens playing with string. The string was agreed, but the kittens went the way of the snakes.

"It's drawn in pencil crayon, and basically I had some red wool kicking around that I twisted around into shapes, and while I didn't copy that directly, because it would have taken me too long, it gave me a sense for what wool or string does when it's twisting up into shapes," she describes.

To get the letterforms right, she employed an often-overlooked device: "I used my imagination."

bantjes.com

Top left Bantjes' cover for *The Walrus*.

Left International graphics magazine *Étapes* commissioned Bantjes to create a cover for its 15th anniversary, highlight her working process, from sketch to final design in a single piece.

A play on words

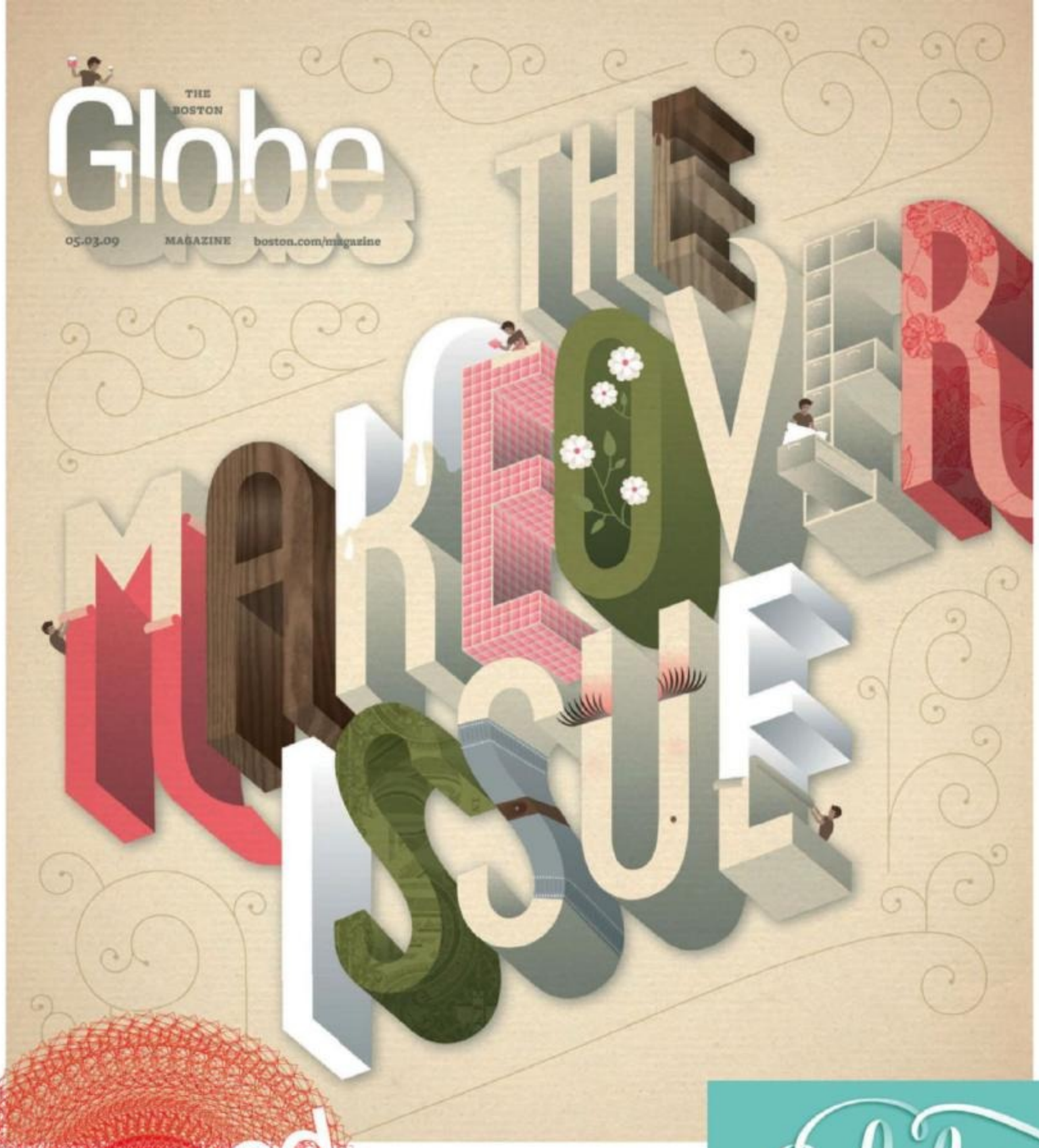
> Jiro Bevis lives and works in East London. A fan of American cartoonist Robert Crumb, he studied graphic design at Central St Martin's School of Art. His work is largely hand-drawn, giving it an edgy, playful, and very young look. He cleans up works in Illustrator if needs be. Bevis' work for Umbro *(right)* is a good example of his hand-drawn typographic style.

"They gave me the phrase, and I showed them a couple of ideas," he explains. "One idea was people holding all the scarves with all the wording. I had two days to do it. But then again, if I'd had more time, and if I think too much about what they want to represent it might not be readable."

jirobevis.co.uk

Top Jiro Bevis' approach is perfect for quirky, youth-oriented campaigns like this National Express ad.

Right Bevis' Umbro campaign.



Left For Jessica Hische's piece for *The Boston Globe* magazine's makeover issue, she says that drawing lettering from scratch for angled words was the biggest challenge: getting this right is crucial. "Otherwise you can tell it was skewed because the weights change on the verticals, horizontals, and diagonals."

Below Hische's ribbon type is one of her most in-demand styles.

> Brooklynite Jessica Hische specialises in all things type, and has a portfolio that includes work for *GQ*, *The Boston Globe* and *Harvard Business Review*, and more. One of her specialities is ribbon type: swirling, calligraphic script that is surprisingly versatile and highly sought-after by clients.

"With the ribbon type work, I present pencils [sketches] first so the client can see the composition of the type and approve it from there," she explains. "When I'm drawing it in Illustrator, I draw a guide stroke for the type (basically draw a continuous script with one line) and then draw shapes on top of that to make the ribbon's thick and thins. Ribbon type still has to be very legible, and often I'll have to adjust letters if they're not legible enough."

No letters repeat within the same composition. Finally she uses Illustrator gradients to add lighting effects.

jhische.com

"Ribbon type still has to be very legible – often I'll have to adjust letters"

Jessica Hische

Create incredible Type

> **LEARN** ILLUSTRATED LETTERING

Get started with type art

Artist **Pomme Chan** shows us how to take your first steps in letter-based illustration

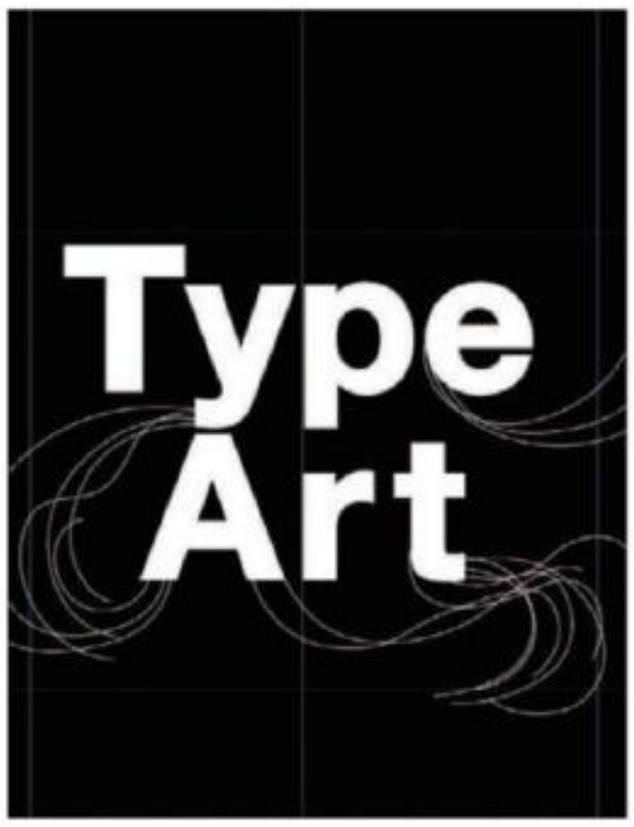
As we explain in the Type Art Now feature (see page 138), type art is popular at the moment for all sorts of reasons – and it's a highly versatile skill to have. You can use illustrated lettering in projects ranging from posters to brochures – making it a great technique to add to your creative toolset.

But beware: type art is so popular at the moment that there's a lot of crud out there. The rules are the same as for any aesthetic style: learn the basics carefully, and then be original.

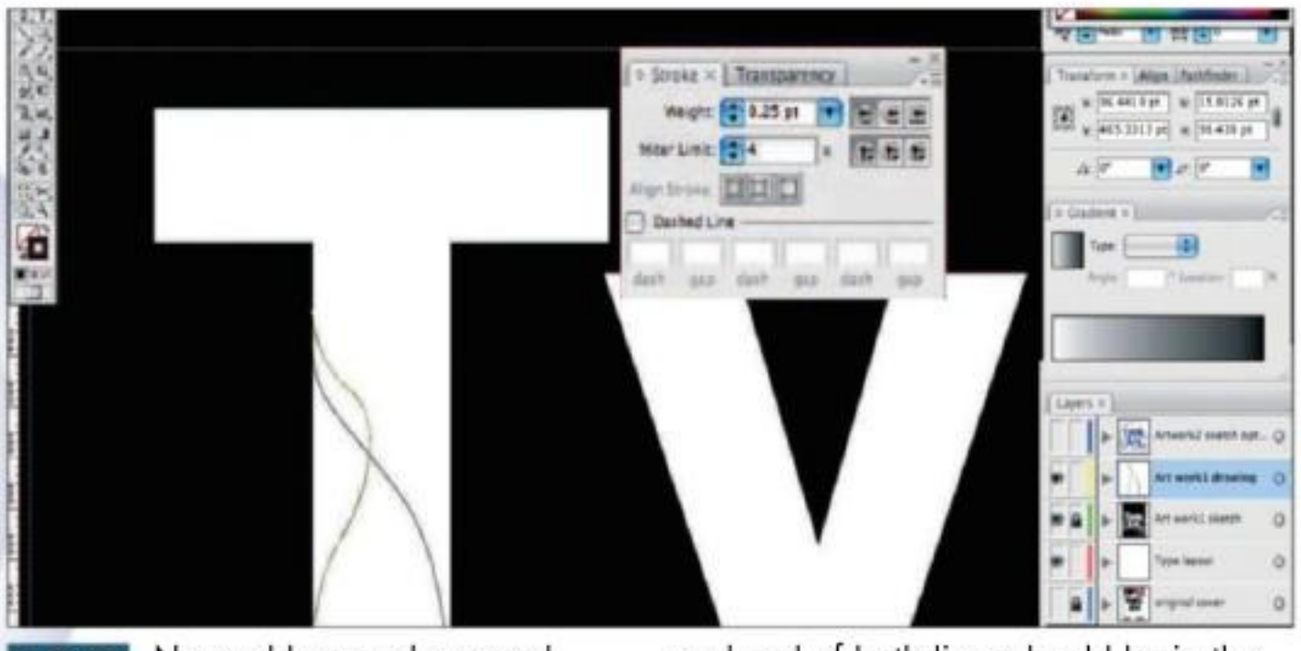
With type-based art there's a whole extra dimension, though: legibility. As our feature says, there's some debate over how legible type-based art needs to be – but you should be able to make the lettering completely clear if you or the client feels the project needs it.

In this tutorial, lettering guru Pomme Chan talks you step-by-step through how she created this incredible image (*shown opposite*).

You can download the tutorial's resource files from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*.



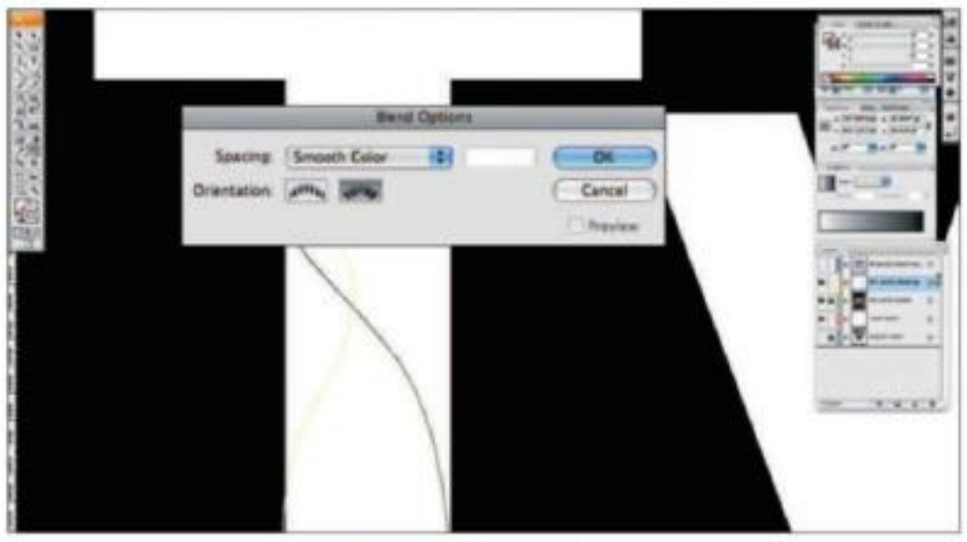
STEP 01 In Illustrator, open a new file and set up an A4 artwork. Type the words 'Type Art' in Helvetica, then create an outline (**Type > Create Outline**, or **Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + O**). Make any adjustments to your type using the Direct Selection tool (the white arrow), then use the Pen tool (**P**) to create swirls where you'd like the line to flow. These don't need to be precise – you can adjust them later. When you've finished, lock this layer so you can't move it – you'll only use it as a guide.



STEP 02 Now add a new layer and use the Pen tool (**P**) to create two or three lines – experiment with blending options here.

We're going to create a shadow inside the typeface, so you need to be clear how you want your type to flow. The trick is that the beginning and end of both lines should be in the same vertical and horizontal axis, and shouldn't be too far from one another.

In the middle of the line you can create twists and curves, but in the middle of the line you can twist and curve them. Both lines should be quite thin (I use 0.25pt).



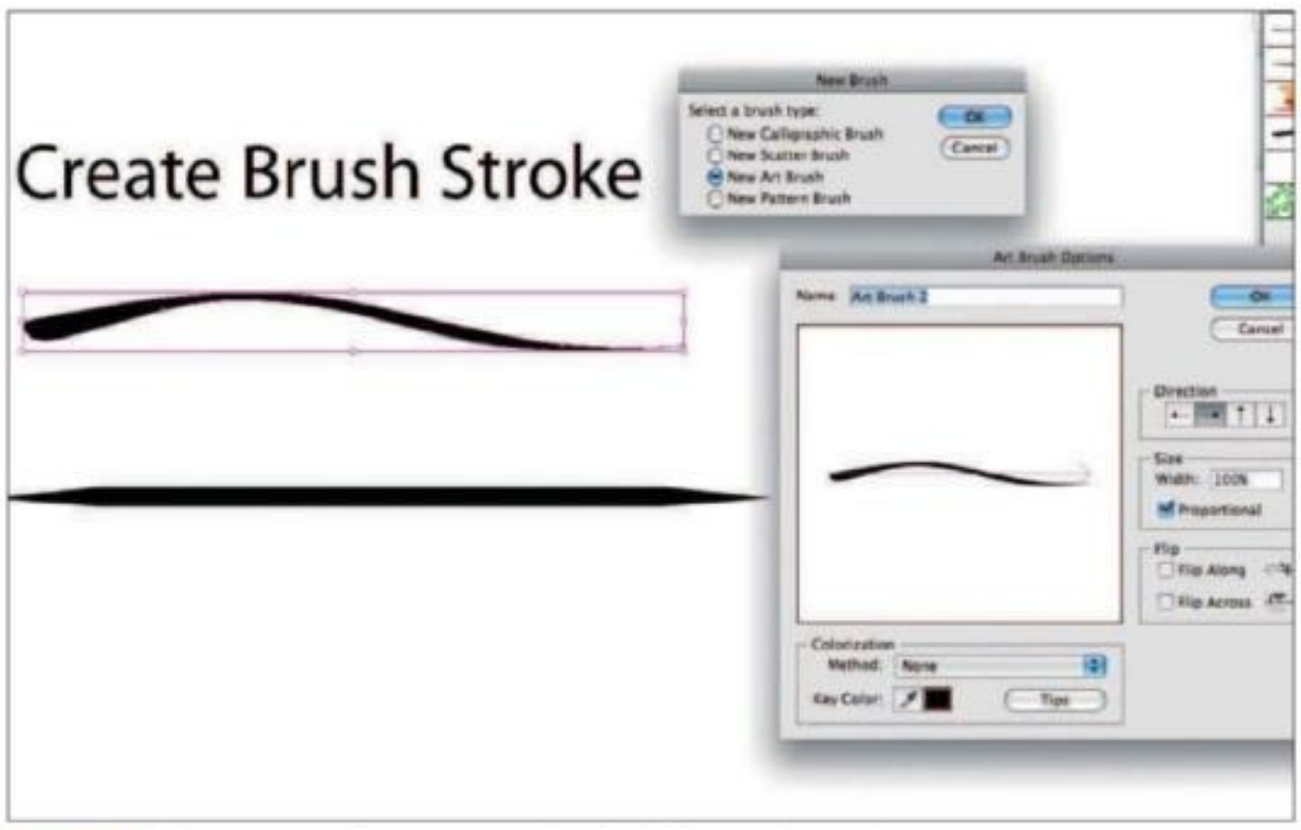
STEP 03 Next change one line to white, and the other to black. Click on the Blend tool in the toolbar, click on **Blend Option > Smooth Color**. Click at the beginning or the end of the white path.

STEP 04 Now you have a nice blended curve. Repeat this for the rest of your type. If it comes out looking really wrong, this is probably because you've made the curve in the middle too complicated.

The trick is to match the number of anchor points in each pair of lines. You don't have to count everything, just make sure they're not very different from one another. Be patient – this step takes a couple of hours or more.

STEP 05 Once you've filled your letters with blended curves, play with the curve layers, making them larger (**Cmd/Ctrl +]**) or smaller (**Cmd/Ctrl + [**) until you're happy with it. Create some white swirly lines inside the letter, especially around the white areas, using the Pen tool with a 0.1pt black line filled with white.

STEP 06 Once you're happy with everything, it's time to create those outside swirls. Unlock the Draft layer you created at the beginning. Choose all the lines, then select **View > Guides > Make Guides** (**Cmd/Ctrl + 5**).

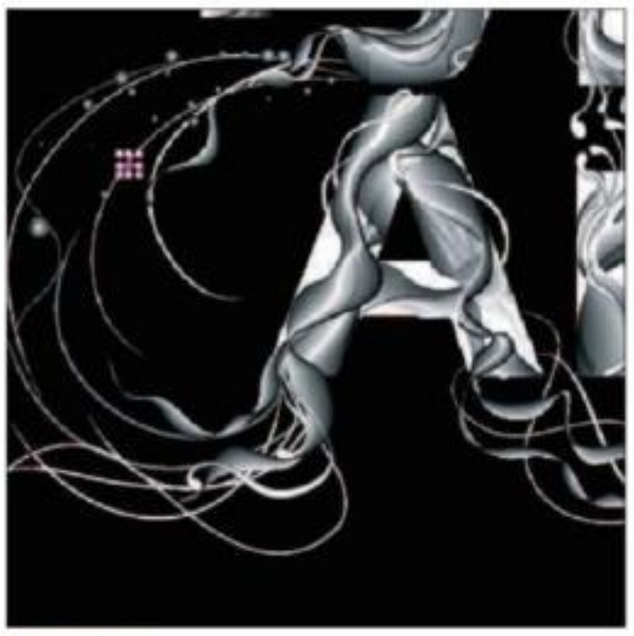


STEP 07 Now we need to create a brush. We need a stroke that's thin at the beginning and end: you can open the file *material.ai* from the project files you opened at the start of the tutorial and copy each brush shape to your file – or create a line of your own, then click the Brush symbol and choose **New Brush > New Art Brush > Proportional**.

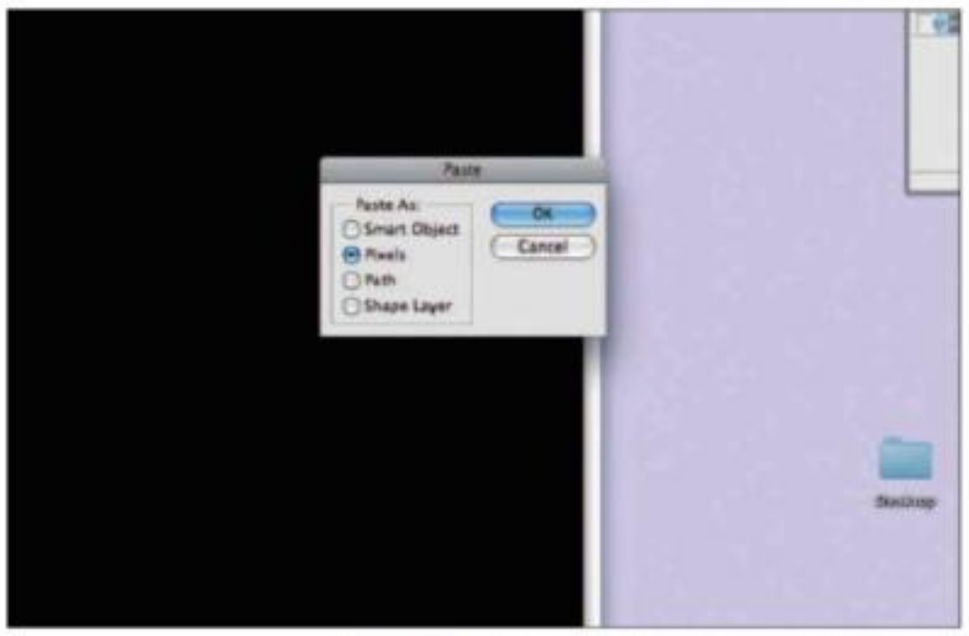
STEP 08 Now use the Pen tool to create a path that follows your curve guide. Then choose your brush, set it to a very fine stroke (0.1 to 0.25pt). Now trace over the swirls outside and inside the letters. Play with the opacity – setting it to 50% at the Normal blending mode, or setting the blending mode to Overlay and the opacity to 80% inside the letter.

TIP

› It's important to separate your work into different layers from the start in Illustrator, so that when you copy and paste them they're separate layers in Photoshop. The following should be separated into different layers: the curved shadow inside the layers; the white swirl that comes from within the letters; the decorative dots; and the white swirls in the letters.



STEP 09 Once you've got everything in the right place it's time for the decorative process. You can add circles using the Ellipse tool (**L**) with a radial colour gradient. Play around with these, making them slightly bigger near the letter and smaller further away, and placing them around the white swirl lines. Unlock your Type Art text letter, and set the letter colour to 50% grey. Then copy the layer.

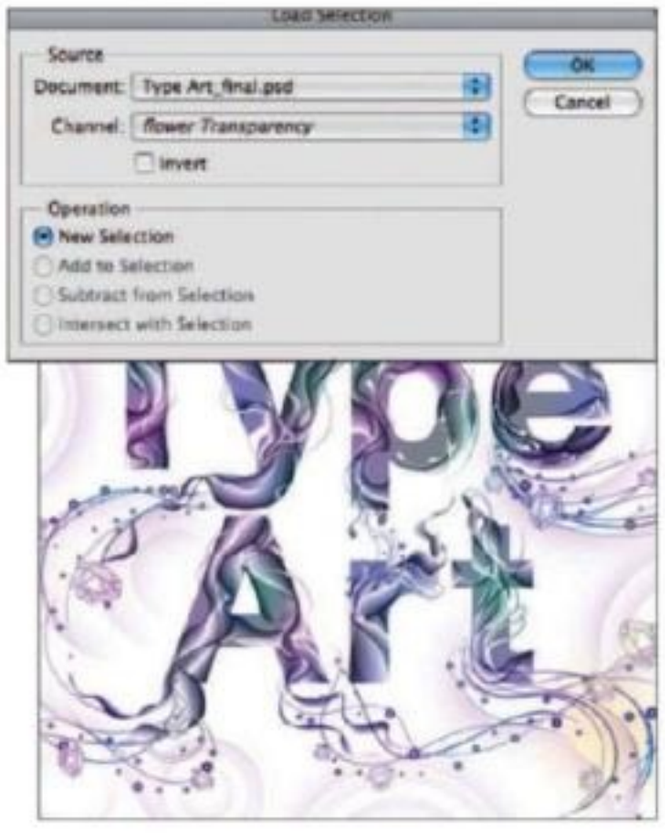


STEP 10 Open Photoshop, create a new A4 artwork at 300dpi in RGB, then paste each layer from the Illustrator file. Smart Objects is convenient, but I prefer to paste in Pixels so that I can delete or clean up bits in Photoshop.

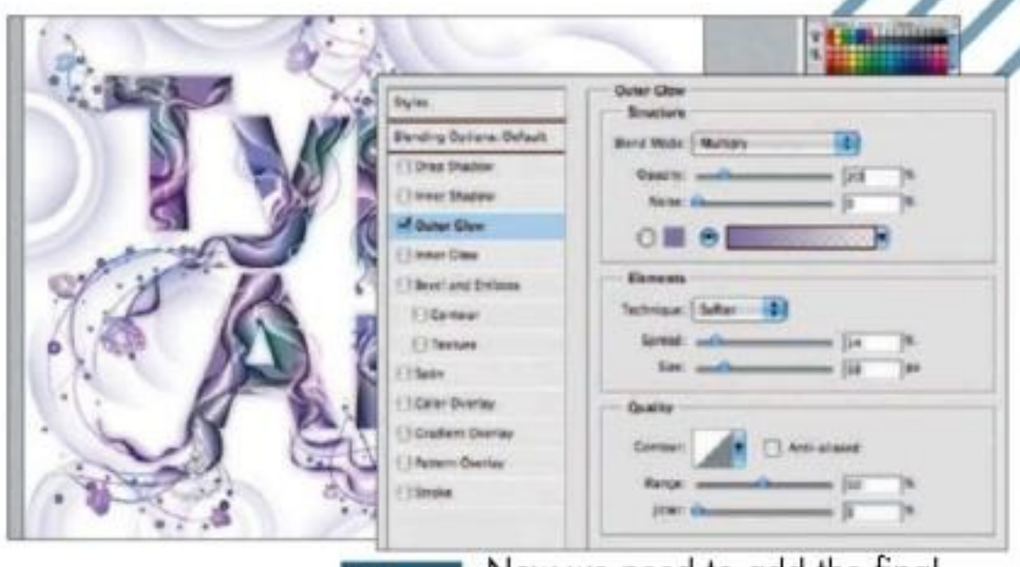
STEP 11 Open the file *Material.ai*, and copy the rose line drawing. Paste it into Photoshop, then rotate, copy and move them around until you're satisfied.

STEP 12 Now let's add some colour. In a new layer at the top of the Layers palette, set the blending mode to Color and then start adding colour using the Brush tool: this way it's easy to add or delete colours without affecting other areas. When I colour, I set the Brush tool's opacity to 30% to 40% to keep the colours soft.

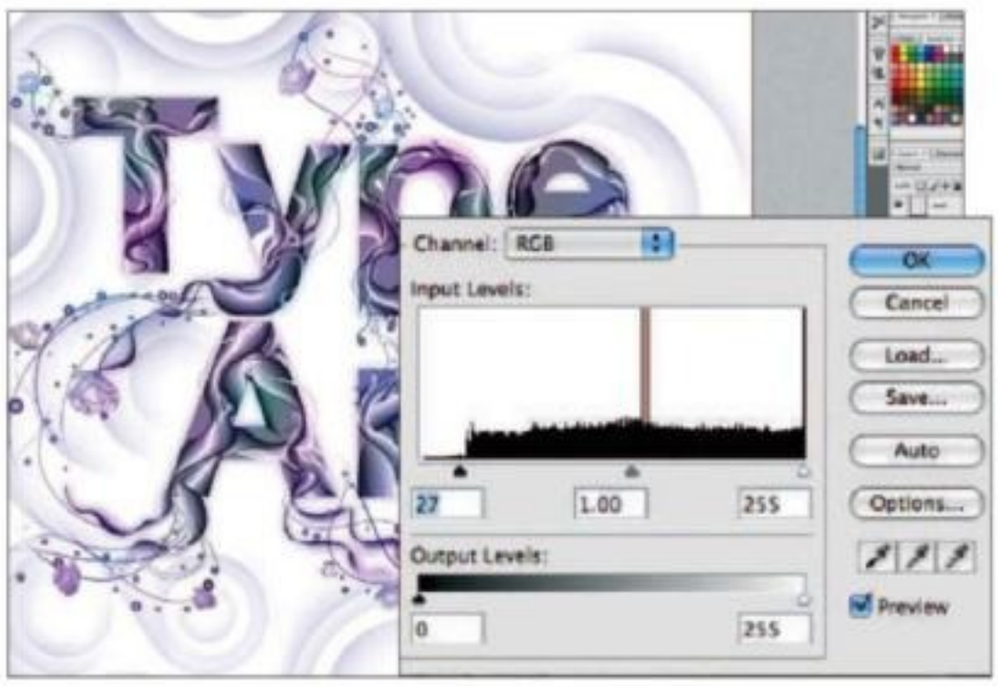
STEP 13 When you're happy with your colours, create a new layer on top of the other layers for background decoration. Using the Elliptical Marquee tool (**M**) create a circle then, using the Brush tool, paint very light colours around the circles. Sometimes you can make the circle then invert the selection (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + I**) and fill around it, too.



STEP 14 Delete the black background layer. Click on the white swirly-line layer, then invert them (**Cmd/Ctrl + I**): this will become a black line. Set the layer's opacity to 50% and move it so it's beneath the colours layer – this will give the artwork beautiful soft colours. You can colour the roses now if you haven't done them already: click on the flower layers, **Select > Load Selection**, then create another layer, setting it to Multiply. Start filling the roses in that layer with colour.



STEP 15 Now we need to add the final touches – I want the words to glow; this also makes them easier to read. Click on your original black-and-white layer that you pasted from Illustrator, select **Layer Style > Outer Glow**, and pick the colour you want. Set the opacity to 20%, the noise to 0, the spread to 14%, the size to 38% and the range to 50%. You can apply these settings to other layers too if you like.



STEP 16 We're almost finished. I like to have a darker shade in the type – you can set this using **Edit > Adjustment > Level**. You can also make the outer lines softer using the Erase brush (set to 50% opacity), erase at the end of each stroke or wherever you think it's suitable. ■

INFO POMME CHAN

› Born in Thailand, Pomme Chan moved to London in 2002 and has become a sought-after illustrator. Her distinctive felt-tip style illustrations have won her clients including Liberty, Nike, Microsoft, Mercedes-Benz, and titles including *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *Financial Times*, and many more.

CONTACT
- *pommepomme.com*

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 5-6 hours

MASTERCLASS

HONE YOUR DESIGN SKILLS WITH EXPERT TECHNIQUES

INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 2-3 hours

SOFTWARE
- Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

> LEARN TYPE-BASED GRAPHICS

Experiment with typography effects

Create a trendy logo using traditional and digital media

There's no doubt about it, London is hip. In this tutorial Holland-based designer Bram Vanhaeren shows his admiration by creating a new piece that draws on all that's great about the city – taking inspiration from the Olympics, underground club scenes, and the vista from up high.

This masterclass is about giving your typography illustration a fresh touch and experimenting with traditional and digital media, mixing patterns and textures to give your work an extra personal spark. For this tutorial you will need basic Illustrator and Photoshop skills, as well as some watercolour paint.

Afterwards, you should have acquired hands-on techniques you can use on work ranging from typography and editorial to photo manipulation.

MAKING YOUR OWN BRUSHES

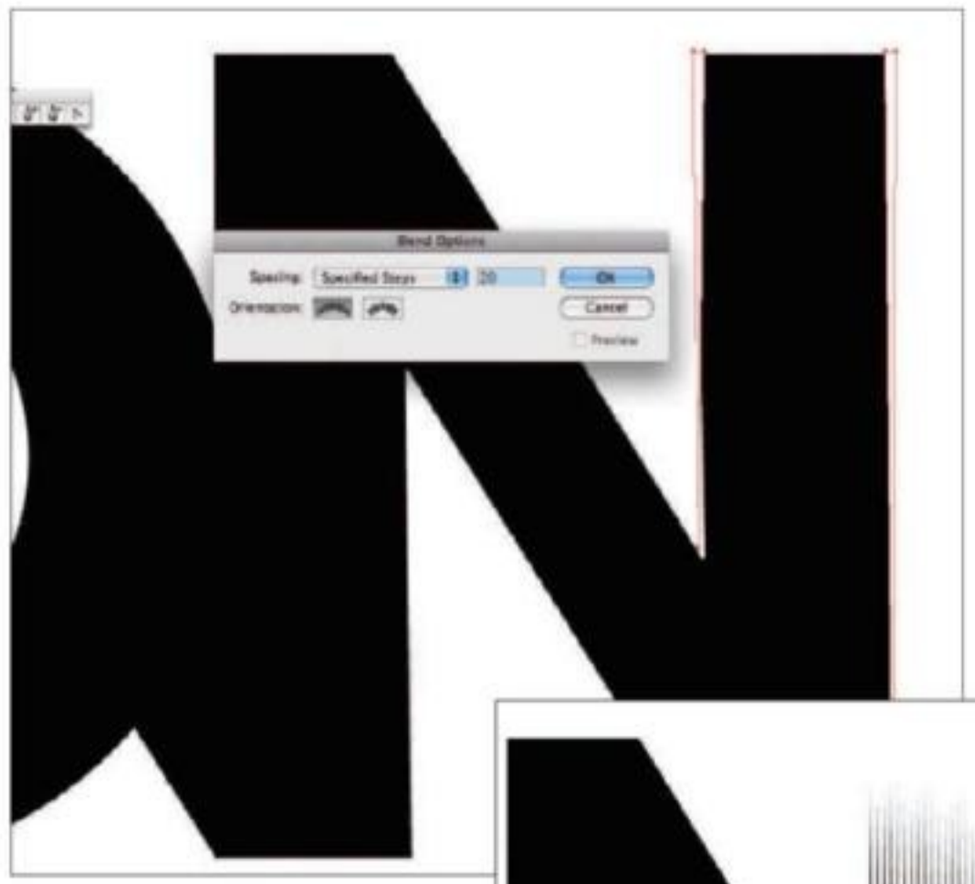
> When creating brushes in Photoshop, make sure that your background is white and check the levels to make sure there's enough contrast without losing quality. Find the right balance before turning them into Photoshop brushes.

STEP 04 In this Step we're going to add a fade effect on some of our letters. First, create two white triangles. Take the Pen tool (**P**), and create a triangle with flat side on top, and sharp side downwards. Duplicate this shape and place the triangles straddling one side of the letter.

STEP 01 Open a new document in Illustrator. Type your text with any font you like – I chose Avant Garde Bold. Select your text and go to **Type > Create Outlines**. Now you can adjust each letter separately.

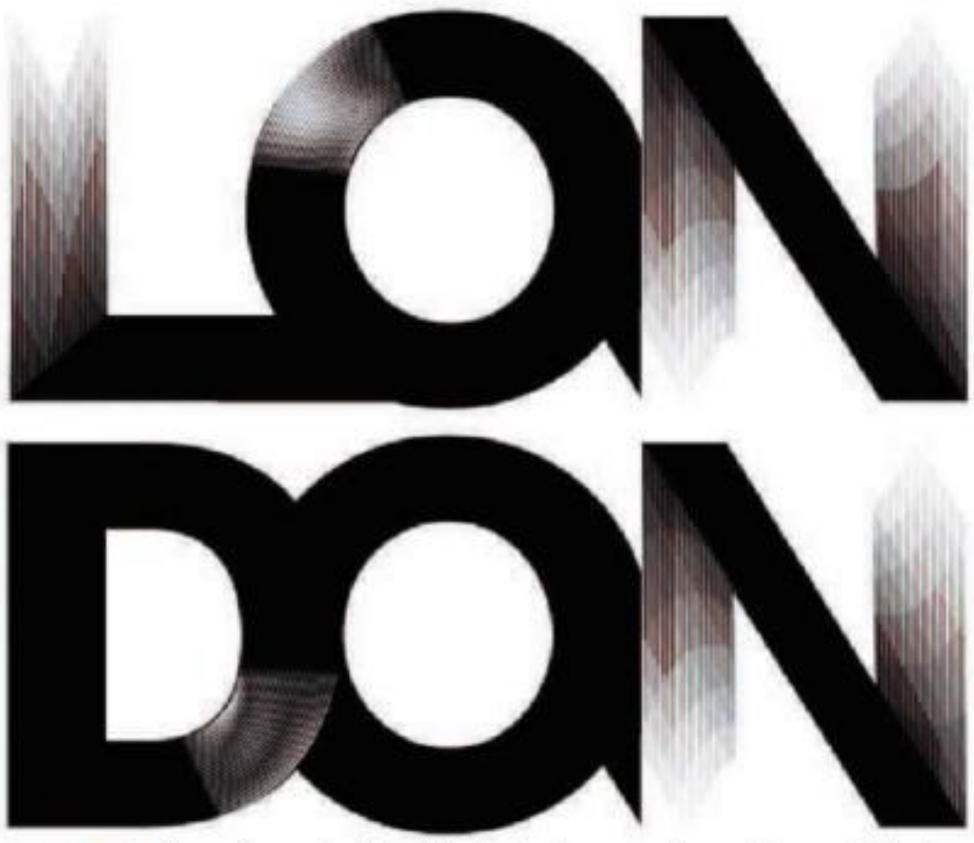
STEP 02 Move your text around until it's sitting in the position you want. I placed some red squares, which helped me to line the text up, and removed them once I found the right composition.

STEP 03 To complete the typography, connect the letters using the Pen tool (**P**) to draw the connection you desire. In this case we just need a couple of oblique rectangles. You can use Pathfinder to merge them all together. Now we have our finished typography to work with.



> The Blend effect, combined with triangular shapes, forms this repeated pattern.

STEP 05 Go to **Object > Blend > Blend Options > Specified Steps > 20**. Press **W** to use the Blend tool and click on both triangles. It should render the result immediately.



A SECOND GLANCE

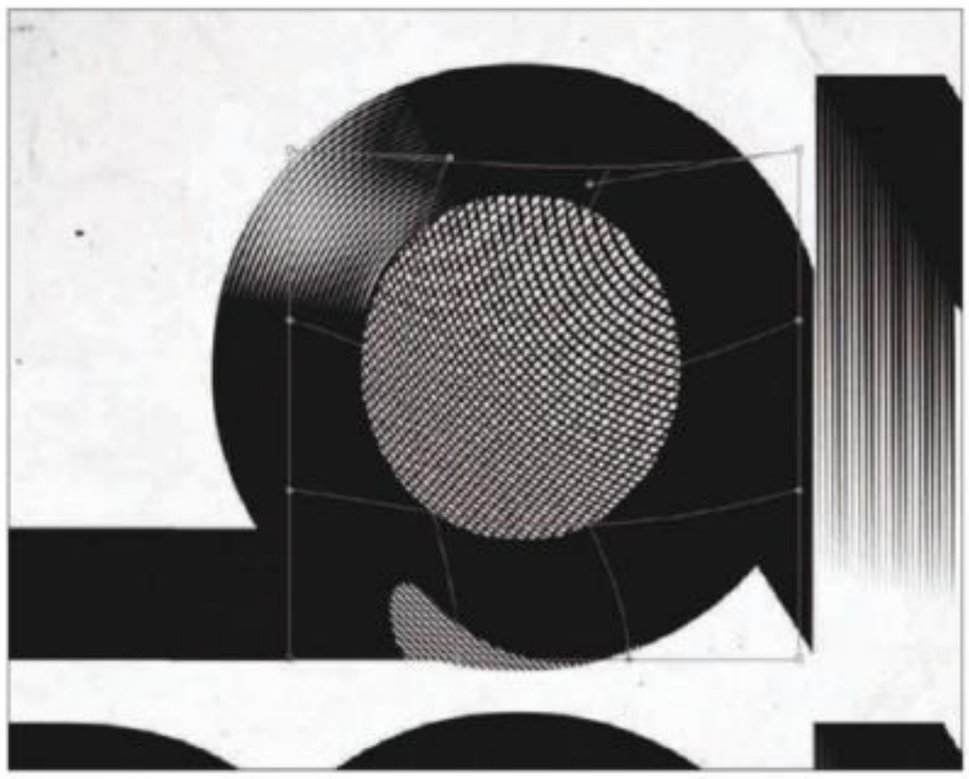
After spending more than two to three hours on a piece, take a break and return to your work later, so you can have a fresh new look at it. You might be surprised with what crazy ideas you come up with. Enjoy and have fun.

STEP 06 Experiment with this technique, using different kinds of shapes to create unique shading in your vector-based illustrations. This is my result.

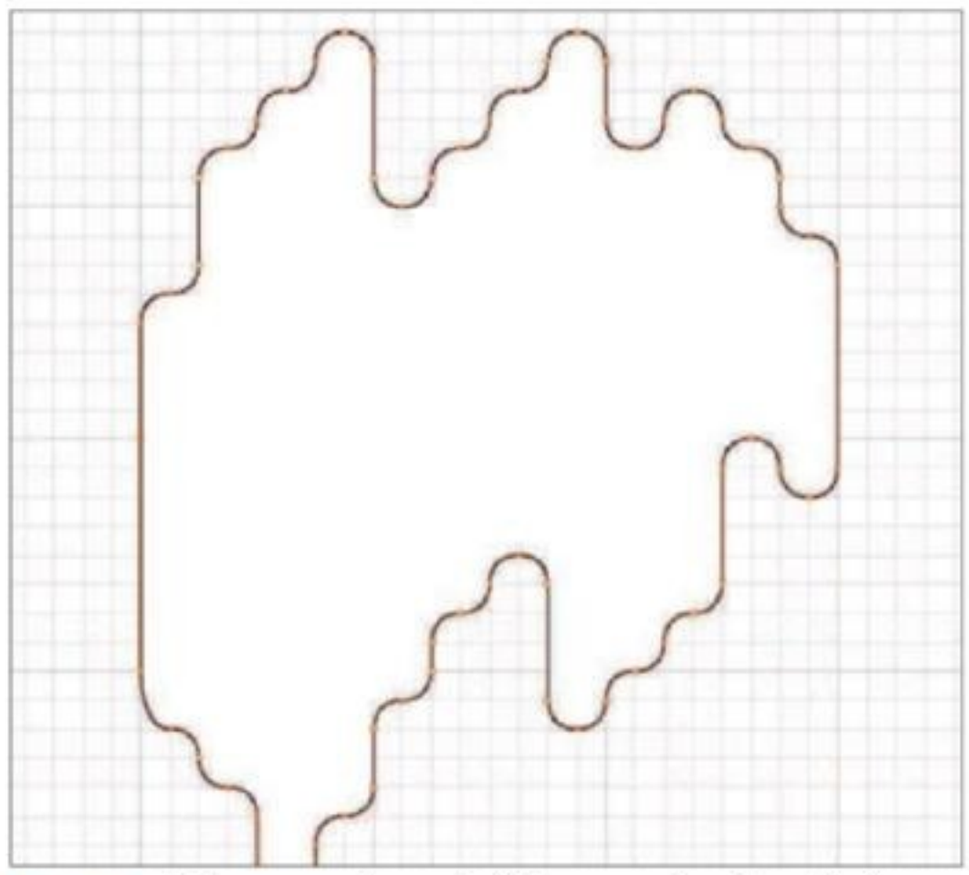
STEP 07 Open a new document in Photoshop by hitting **Cmd/Ctrl + N** – if you plan to get this printed later, try an A3 or A2 file at 300dpi. If you just want to experiment, keep it at 800 x 600 pixels and 72dpi resolution. I always start with a dirty paper texture background, to give it an extra touch. Drag your work from Illustrator to your Photoshop document and Rasterize your vector layer (in the Layer menu).

STEP 08 Select your text by holding **Cmd/Ctrl** and clicking on the layer in the Layers palette. Copy this selection and paste it to the background texture layer to get rid of the white background. Your typography should now be part of the texture. Change the Blend Mode to Multiply, so the white parts disappear in the background. This must be done in Photoshop because the blending mode we've chosen means we can't remove the triangles from the text with the Pathfinder.

STEP 09 For the next Step we're going to make a new pattern. In Photoshop, open a new document at 50 x 50 pixels with a transparent or white background. Make a cross with the Line tool (**U**). Next, hit **Cmd/Ctrl + A** to select all and **Edit > Define Pattern**. I have a lot of patterns to play with: big crosses, small crosses, dots, lines, squares and so on – they're all very useful. Also try more lines and other shapes to create patterns.



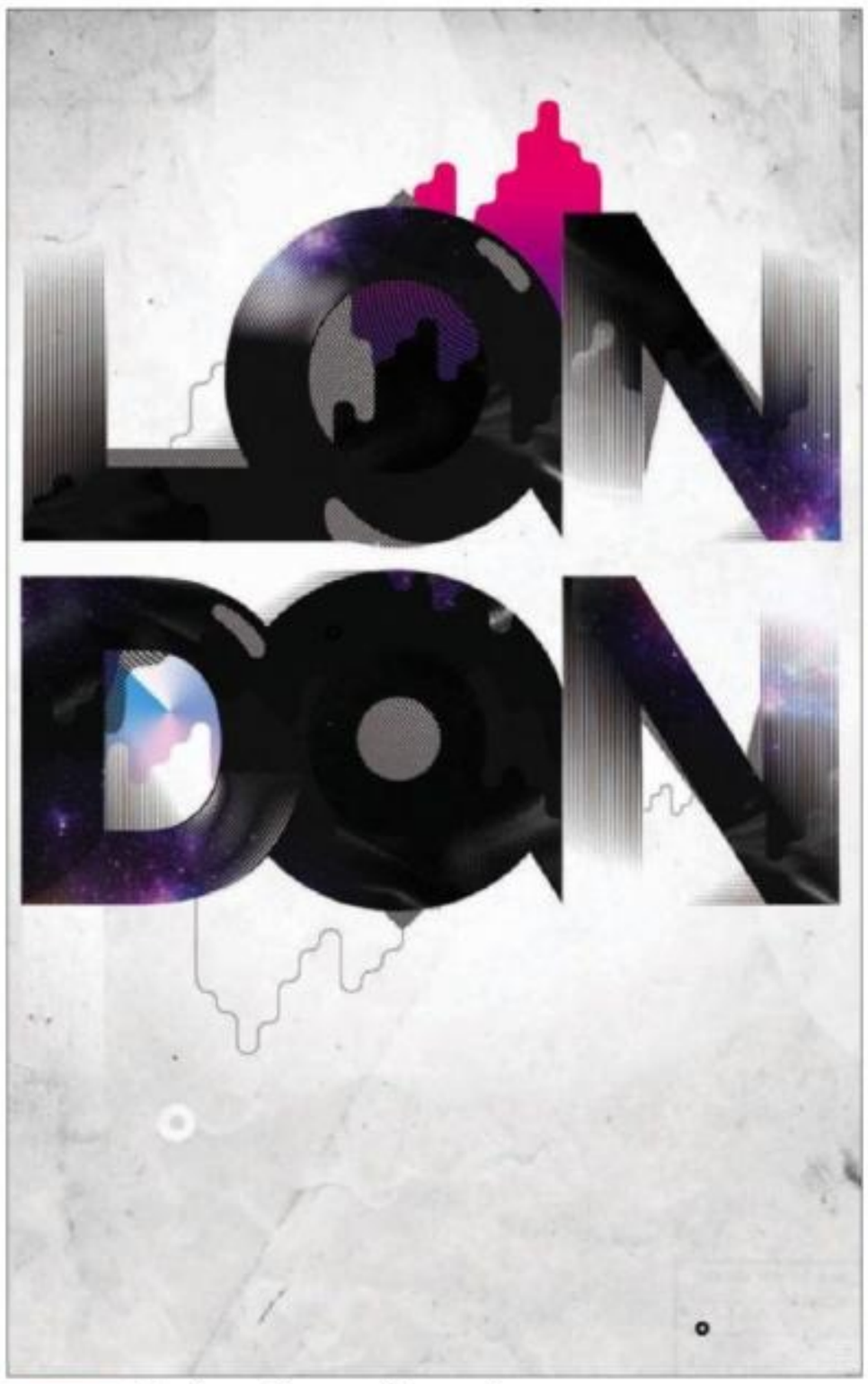
STEP 10 Fill a circle with your pattern by going to **Edit > Fill** and selecting your pattern. Go to **Edit > Transform > Warp** and pull on a corner to add depth. Place this behind some of your letters. Play with your options to come up with a good solution.



STEP 11 At the moment we don't have much colour. To fix this, I made a shape in Illustrator with the Pen tool (**P**), which I will use as a base to create some extra colour by adding gradients and textures.

STEP 12 An original solution to fill this shape is to use random images. For example, take a photo of a leather sofa, cut out your shape from the image and you have an abstract black texture to fill your work with.

STEP 13 After adding some more abstract shapes filled with textures, I want to give this a spacey look (you can find amazing space images on the NASA site at *nasa.gov*). Drop them on top of your work and set your Blending Option to Screen to create a lovely colour effect.



STEP 14 So far we've experimented with shapes, gradients, patterns and pictures. After some more playing around, this is what I got. I suggest you do the same thing, using techniques you've learned in this tutorial to fill up the work a little more.

STEP 15 To add some traditional elements, I took a paper and some old watercolours to paint brushstrokes. You can find tonnes of Photoshop brushes online, but nothing is as unique as your own creation.

STEP 16 After you've painted your brushstrokes, scan or photograph the result. Next, open the document in Photoshop, select one of your strokes and go to **Edit > Define Brush Preset**. Add the brushes to your work and play around with more tools, such as Twirl and Wave distortions. ■

PROFILE BRAM VANHAEREN

Athletics enthusiast Bram Vanhaeren is a 20-year-old digital artist from Belgium. He's been developing his graphic style since first experimenting with Pen tools in Illustrator around five years ago.

Bram runs creative studio Into1 with his brother Tim. His work ranges from simple illustrations and typography to mixed media artwork.

CONTACT

• *bramvanhaeren.com*

Right *One Chance*, an illustration for Designers Against Child Slavery.

Far right A T-shirt design by Bram, based on pencil drawings, that uses patterns to create a nice typography.

LEARN 3D TYPOGRAPHY

Discover hidden depths in type illustration

Charles Williams creates a beautiful 3D logotype and blends it into a scene

Here, illustrator Charles Williams shows you how to create an elegant logotype with a 3D finish. You'll then learn how to integrate it successfully into a photograph to give a naturalistic result.

Rather than using a 3D application such as Maya, you'll discover how to apply your Illustrator and Photoshop skills to create a photorealistic artwork with depth and a unique character.

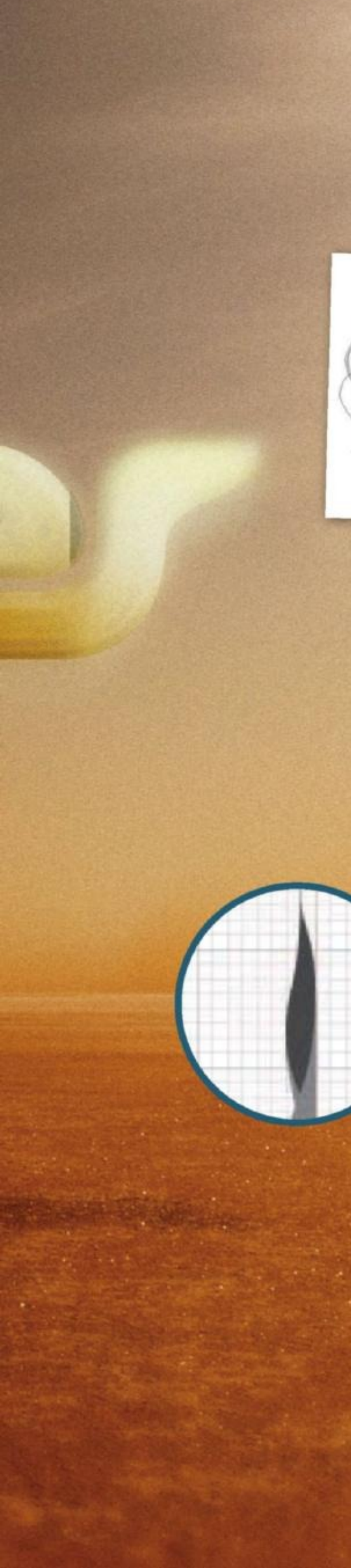
If you don't have Illustrator, you can still follow most of this tutorial; you'll need to import Charles's vector logotype, which can be found in our project files.

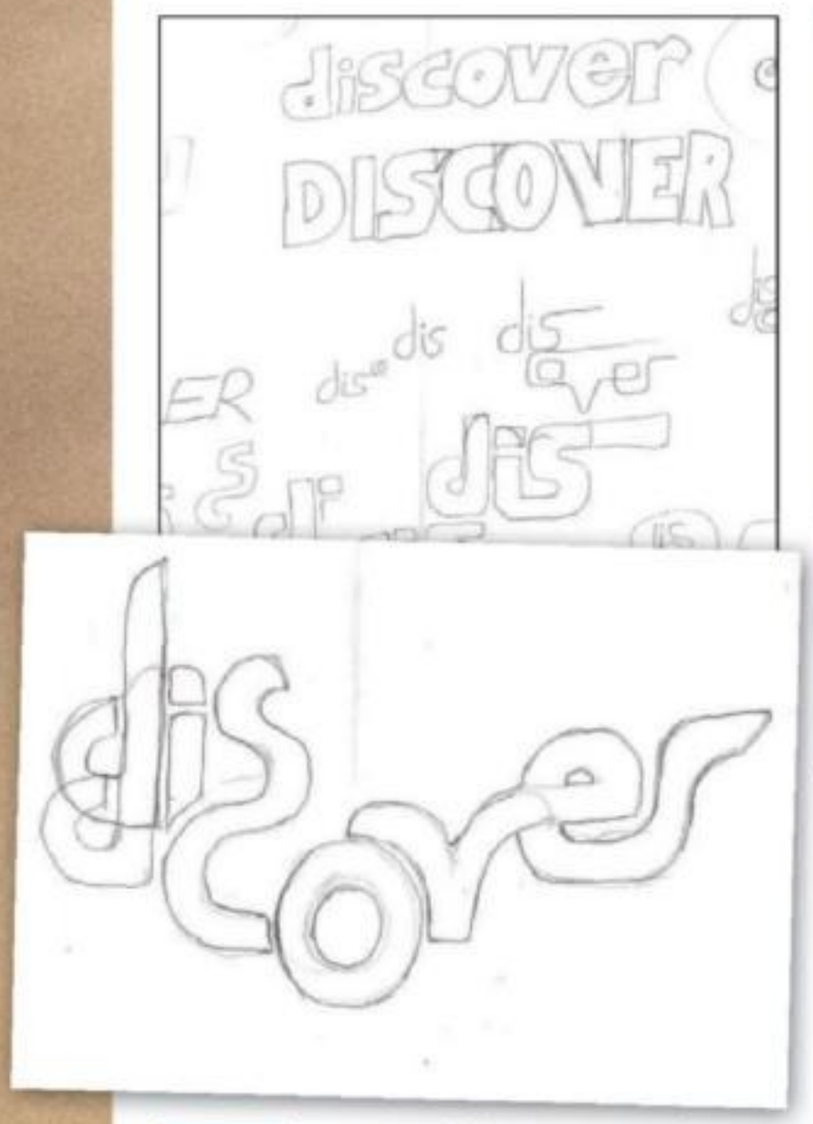
INFO

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 3 hours

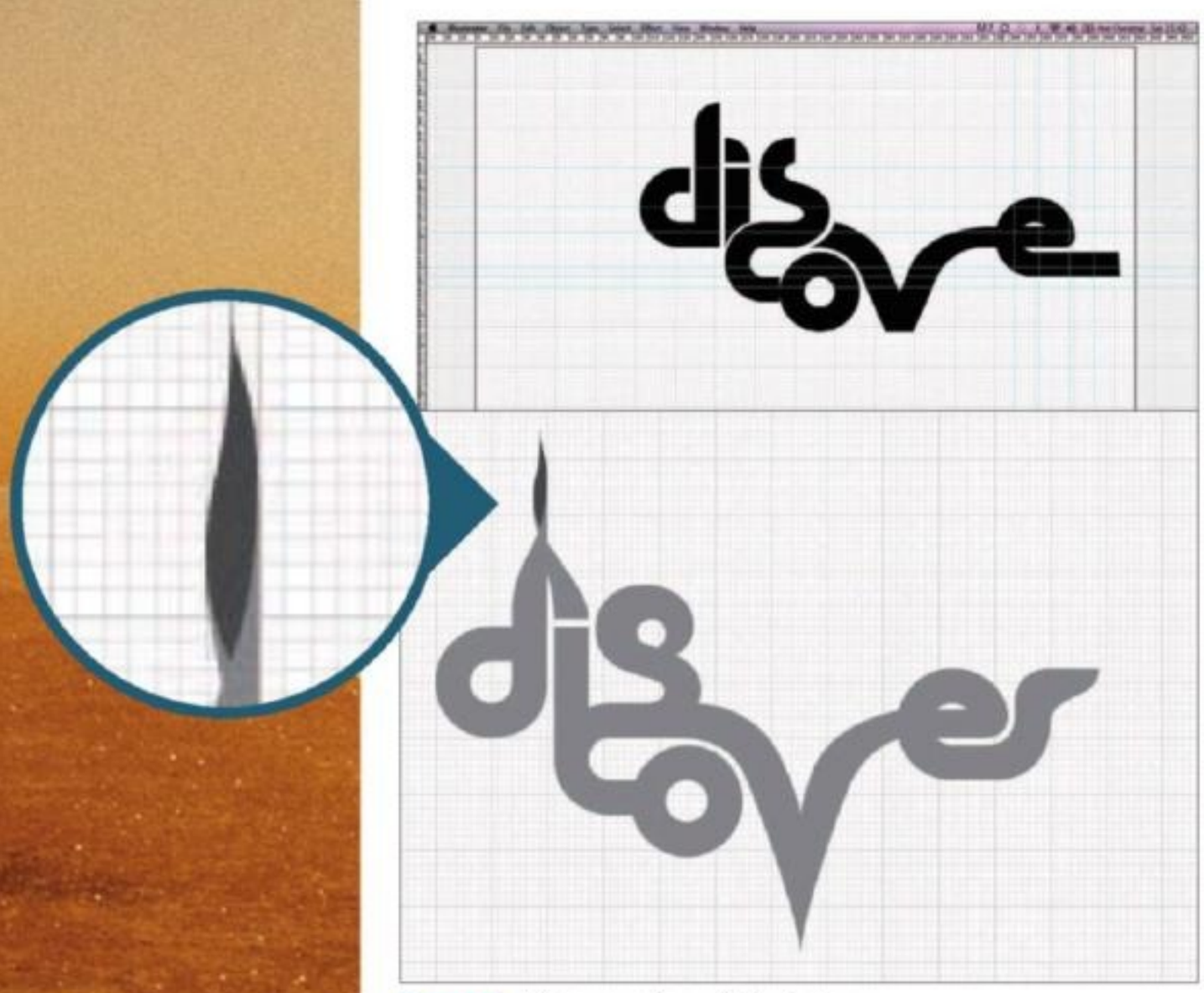
SOFTWARE
- Adobe Illustrator CS2 or higher, Photoshop CS2 or higher

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*





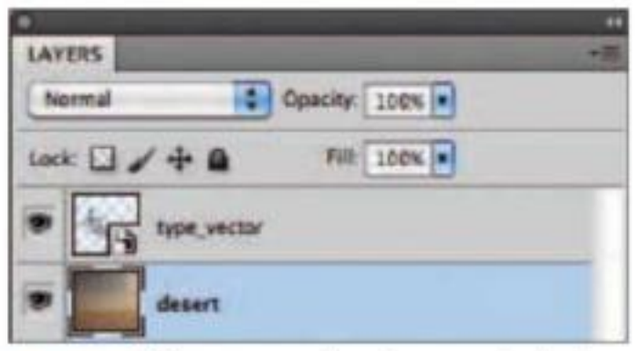
STEP 01 It's incredibly important that you start a piece like this in the sketchbook. That way you can quickly establish what works – and what doesn't. Look at ways in which the letterforms relate to each other, and make the shapes nice and thick so that you'll have lots of surface area to work with later.



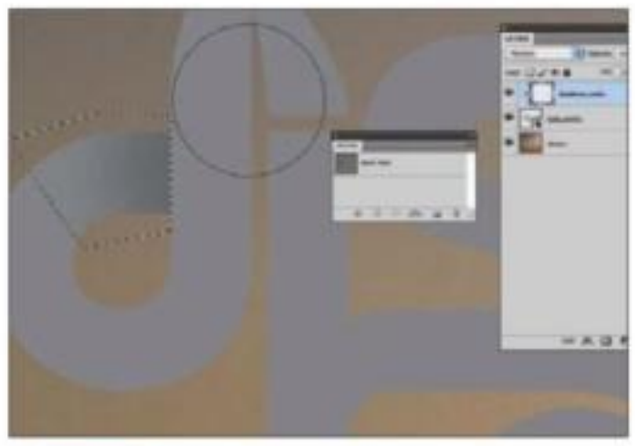
STEP 02 When you're satisfied, trace the result in Illustrator. I work using the grid, with Snap to Grid (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + "**) enabled – this means you can ensure consistency in size and that everything is exact. What works on paper doesn't always work on screen, so feel free to modify and improve. Note that I've fused the tops of the 'd' and 'i' and sort of twisted them together.

CAN YOU READ WHAT IT IS YET?

While it's important that the type looks good, it's also important that it's legible, especially for client work. This is why sketching ideas first is so pivotal to success. I test my work on friends during the design process, without telling them what it says. When you've been staring at lettering for 10 hours, it may look legible to you, but fresh eyes can offer a better perspective.



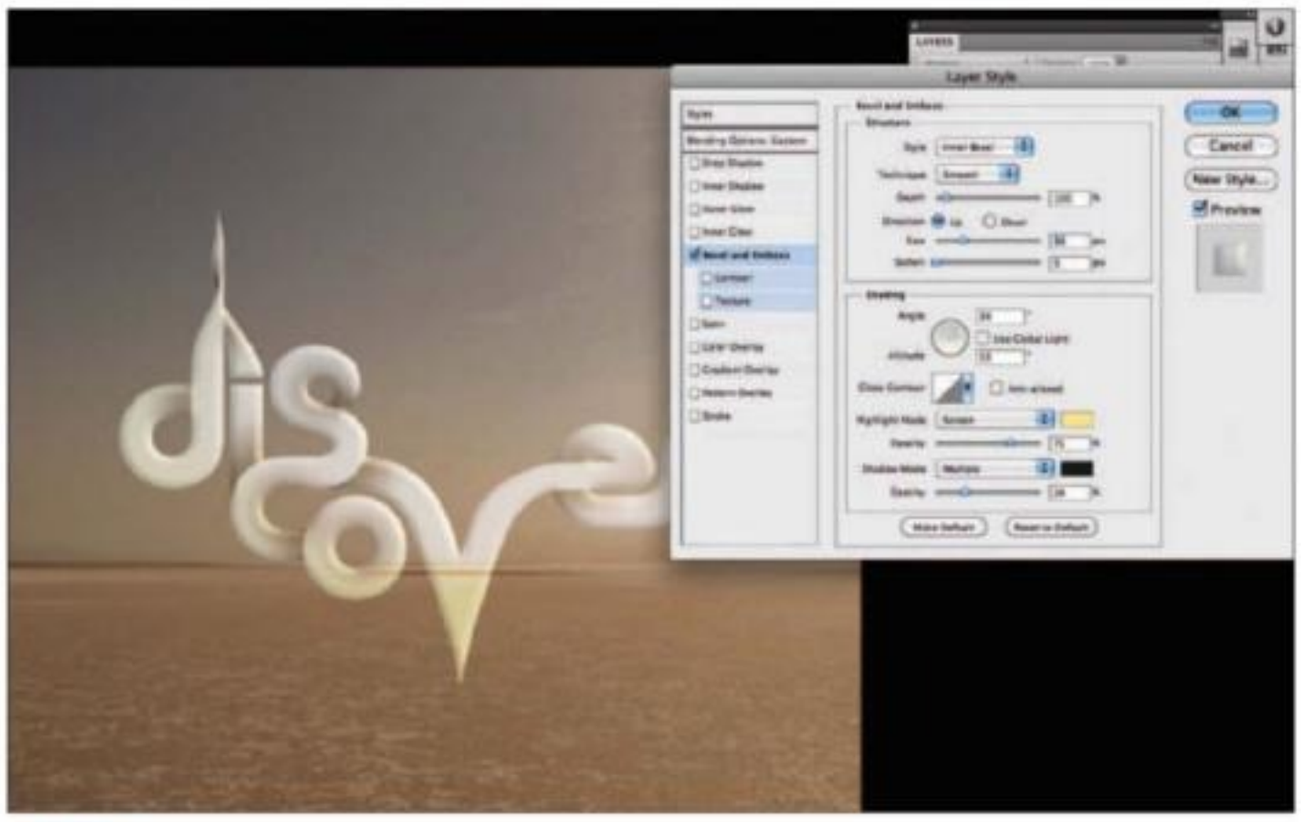
STEP 03 Open your background photo in Photoshop. I've used a shot of a salt pan in Tunisia, which you can find on the Download Zone. Crop the canvas size to 420mm square at 300dpi, and name the photo layer 'desert'. Paste the type as a vector Smart Object and name it 'type_vector'. Position it in the centre of the image.



STEP 04 Making sure the 'type_vector' layer is selected, create a new layer (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + N**). Ensure the Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask option is checked, and hit OK. Rename this new layer 'shadows_main'.

Draw a path around an area in which you want to create shadow. **Cmd/Ctrl + click** on the path and then use a soft black brush to add the shadows, remembering to position them to match the light in the photo, which is coming from the top right. Apply this process to all of the type. Set the 'shadows_main' layer's blending mode to Multiply.

STEP 05 Some of the shadows will be tricky to add, so use the Pen tool (**P**) carefully to draw the curves correctly. You can use the original Illustrator vector shapes to help make the selection by adding a temporary stroke to the vector Smart Object to highlight the borders of the individual letterforms. Once all the shadows are done, set the 'type_vector' layer's blending mode to Overlay.



06 Double-click the vector Smart Object to edit it in Illustrator. Change the colour to C0, M0, Y0 and K20. Save and close it.

Back in Photoshop, double-click the 'type_vector' layer and add a soft bevel (**Layer > Layer Style > Bevel and Emboss**) using the values shown. The effect should be subtle.

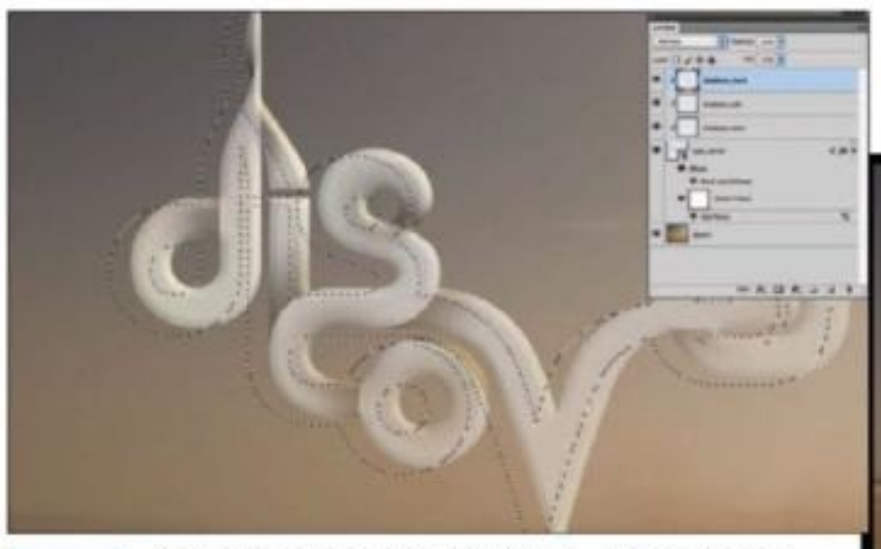
Select the 'shadows_main' layer and create a new layer (again, make it a clipping mask), named 'shadows_more'.

Everything we do needs to be consistent with and reinforce the fact that the light is coming from the top right in our chosen photo.

07 Set the blending mode of 'shadows_more' to Multiply. Using a large soft brush, add shading to accentuate depth. Focus on the left of the image as the light source in the photo is in the top right. Reduce the opacity until it looks realistic.

Add a new layer as a clipping mask called 'shadows_hard'. Set this layer's blending mode to Multiply.

We still need to make the logo look less synthetic, so add noise (**Filter > Noise > Add Noise**, with the Amount at 20%) to the Smart Object.



08 Select the type (**Cmd/Ctrl + click** on the layer icon). Now, using the Marquee tool (**M**), shift the selection down and left, as pictured. Carefully brush in hard-edged shadows on the 'shadows_hard' layer. These should be on areas where the type would cast shadows on itself. Set the layer's blending mode to Multiply, at 50% opacity.

SHOT SELECTION IS CRUCIAL

Always work with the best photographs you can find. Poor shots will make all your typographic grafting pointless. I've recently started using my own shots where possible. Collaborating with photographers is another good idea.

09 Now create two clipping mask layers above the shadow layers and call them 'light_overlay' (blending mode set to Overlay) and 'dark_overlay' (set to Multiply). Use these layers to add light and dark shading to relevant areas.

Add another layer, making sure it's not a clipping mask. Call it 'highlights_dodge' and set its blending mode to Color Dodge. Add light using a soft white brush to make the light areas glow softly.

10 Add a 30% Gaussian Blur (**Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur**) to the 'type_vector' layer. Using a soft black brush, mask out the blur, leaving just a few select edges blurred. This technique gives the type a more natural feel; I think it works better than having everything in sharp focus.

11 To integrate the type into the photo better, we need to add some reflection from the photo to the type. Use the Marquee tool again to select a rectangle the size of the type from the area underneath the type. Go to the 'desert' layer and copy the selection. Paste this into a new clipping mask layer directly above the type in the layer stack.

Add a layer mask using the button on the bottom of the Layers panel. Create a gradient in this to fade it out upwards. Set the layer's blending mode to Multiply.

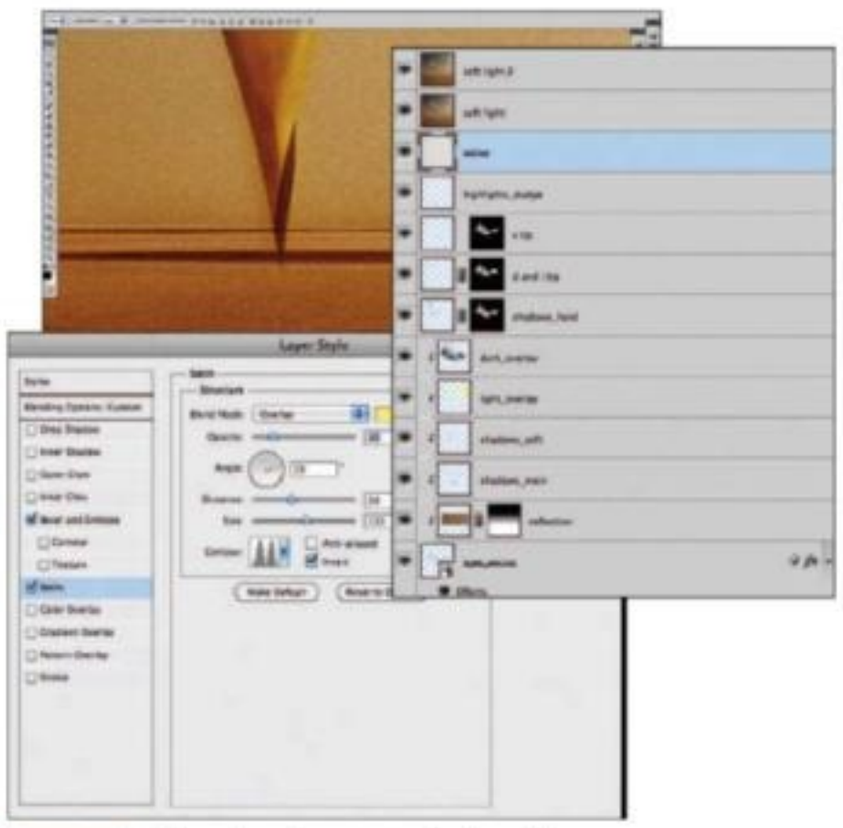
For a more washed-out feel, create a merged version of all layers, apply a Gaussian blur to it and duplicate the result

STEP 12 Select all of your layers, copy a merged version (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + C**) and paste it at the top of the layer stack. Apply a Gaussian Blur at 60% and set the layer's blending mode to Soft Light at 60% opacity. If you want a more washed-out, retro feel, duplicate this layer.

STEP 13 One very important element that will help integrate the type into the scenes is to add a shadow to the ground. Select the type, then create a layer above the 'desert' layer set to Multiply and 60% opacity.

Fill in the selection with black, and flip the shape vertically. Now Free Transform it so it is long and thin. Add a Gaussian Blur of 30%. Apply a mask and use a black brush to fade the shadow out on the right.

STEP 14 Adding a twist to the bottom of the 'v' reflects the twist at the tops of the 'd' and 'i' nicely. To do this, copy the tip from the 'd' and 'i', flip it vertically and paste it behind the tip of the 'v'. Change the colour of the tip to brown to match it with the image.



STEP 15 Create a layer and drag it above all other layers. Fill it with white and set its blending mode to multiply. Add Noise at 20% and desaturate the layer (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + U**). Add some soft Satin to the 'type_vector' layer by selecting **Layer > Layer Style > Satin**, using the values in the screenshot.

STEP 16 To complete the work, add some colour adjustment layers to bring out the yellows and the reds. ■

PROFILE CHARLES WILLIAMS

Charles Williams is an award-winning illustrator. He produces type and illustration for clients such as Volkswagen, the BBC, Nike and Adobe. He also spends as much time as possible on experimental work. Charles has exhibited recently in London and elsewhere in Europe, and has been featured in several type and illustration books, magazines and type/illustration/design blogs. Resident in London, he works under the moniker Made Up.

CONTACT

- *madeup.org*

Above top *Nike Ribbons.*
Above centre *Just Say No.*
Above *Tell Me No Lies.*

STEP 01 The simplest way to create great typography is to modify and embellish lettering created with an existing font. Here we'll take advantage of a typeface called CAC Pinafore, available for free at *bit.ly/gF4xBt*. In a new A4 portrait Illustrator document, type the text 'You Are Sweet as Sugar' in this font at 150pt. Centre-align the text, then convert it into outlines (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + O**).

STEP 02 Perhaps surprisingly for a free font, CAC Pinafore does have a very appealing flow to it – but nevertheless we're about to alter some of the letters to give them a more hand-drawn look. Using the Brush tool (**B**), redo the letters highlighted in red, then replace the original letters with the ones you've made, making sure to cover any joins.

STEP 03 Apply a 4pt stroke around the text to make it look bolder. The type also needs to look more fluid, so let's join up some of the parts and add a few embellishments, including extended terminals on the two capital S's, swooping ligatures to tie the letters together better and looping tails at the end of each word.

Create a few quick swirly strokes with the Brush tool to see how they fit together. Select each of these, open the Brushes panel (**F5**) and click on the Remove Brush Stroke button so we can adjust the paths as if we'd created them with the Pen or Pencil tool.

› **LEARN** FLUID TYPE EFFECTS

Type that's fit to eat

Radim Malinic creates a message to tempt any chocoholic

Exercising creative freedom can be a difficult balancing act. Occasionally you'll have all the time you need to finish a project, but at other times the speediest turnaround will be of the essence.

Regardless of the time available, your work always has to hit the mark, bettering whatever you did previously. So it's imperative to know when you can take a prudent shortcut and when only the utmost care will make your illustration look perfect.

This tutorial reflects some of that dilemma. Here Radim Malinic shows you how to create the semblance of words spelt out in melted chocolate. You'll be encouraged to speed up at times, while at other times you'll need to linger over tiny details to create that ultra-realistic look, fit for any advertising campaign or logo.

The results should look better than Heston Blumenthal could achieve. And you won't need an ounce of chocolate.

› **INFO**

TIME TO COMPLETE
- 5 hours

SOFTWARE
- Illustrator & Photoshop CS5

PROJECT FILES
- Files for this tutorial are downloadable from *theartistsguide.co.uk/downloads*

STEP 04 When you're happy with the positioning of each stroke, go to the Stroke panel (**F10**), change the stroke width to 11pt and also hit the Round Cap button. This will make all the new elements appear similar to the original typeface.

That done, use the Width tool (**Shift + W**) to enlarge or shrink the tips of some lines to give these curly strokes a slightly more varied look. Repeat the process for all joins to emulate a hand-drawn look once again.

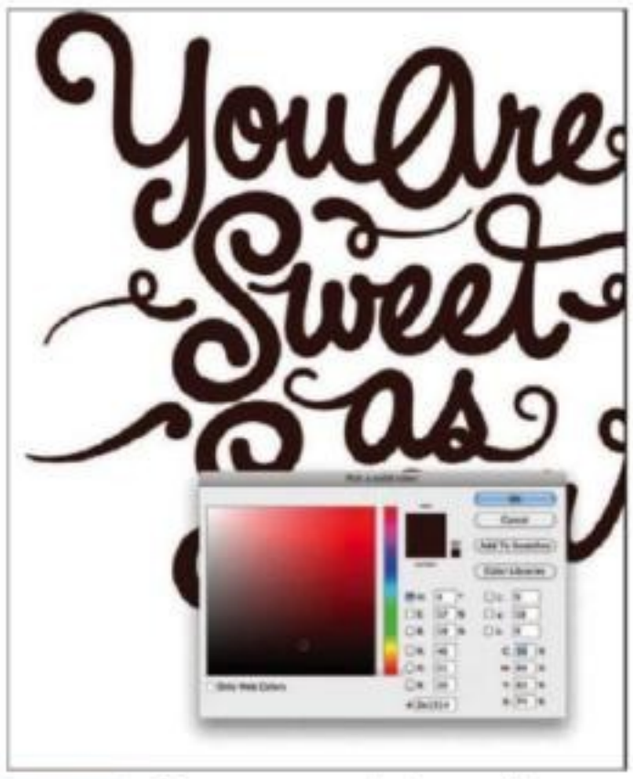
STEP 05 Copy and paste some of the looping tails you've just created and place them around the type. Adjust their shape to fit with the type by using the Direct Selection Tool (**A**) and moving curves as desired.

Next, we'll turn everything into one element so it's easier to work with when we add colour and shading. First, select all and hit **Object > Path > Outline Stroke** to turn all elements into filled shapes. Select all again, go to the Pathfinder panel (**Cmd/Ctrl + Shift + F9**) and select Unite. Clean up any imperfections by deleting anchor points.

STEP 06 To create the area that we'll add inner-glow-style highlights to, go to **Object > Path > Offset Path** and use -0.85mm as the Offset. Cut this offset path out and paste it next to the main type. The result should look like what's in the project file *Type.ai*.

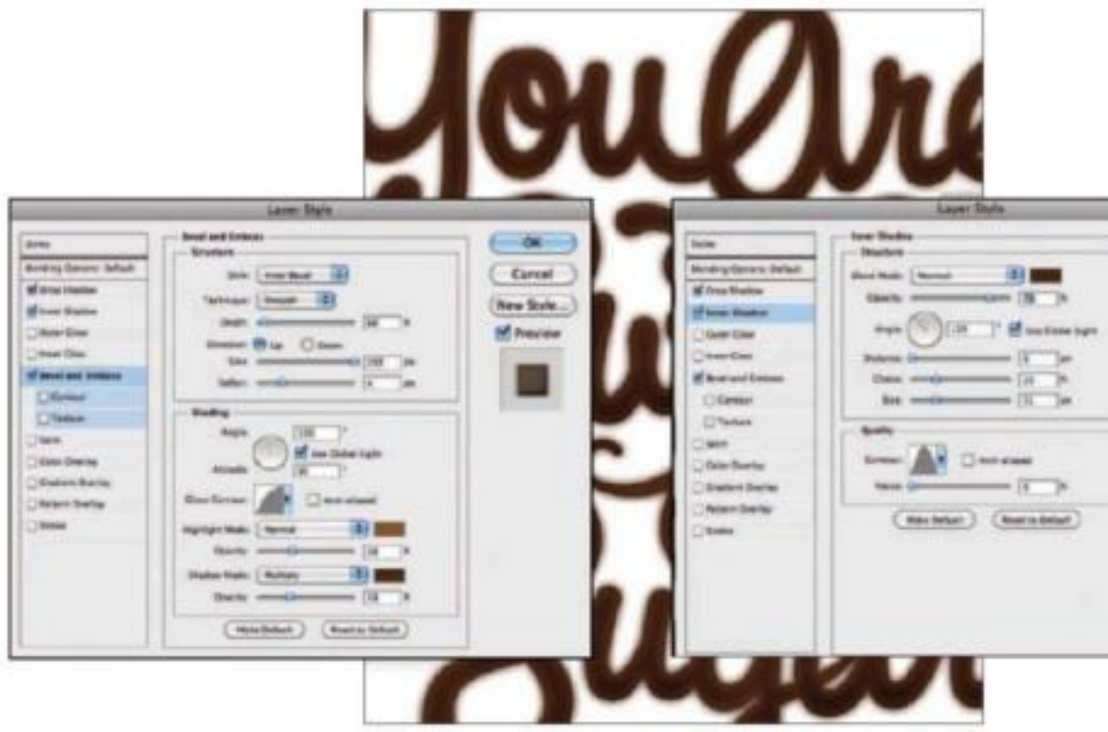
STEP 07 Invert the fill and stroke colours (**Shift + X**) and add a 4pt stroke to the shape. Next, we'll create the flowing elements that will be composited onto the main text to make it look like viscous chocolate, so we need to think about how this will work.

The approach we'll use is to cut out lines from the outline to give a sense of motion to the type. Use the Direct Selection tool (**A**) and delete parts of the lines and the tails – basically, those areas that would be touched lightly by a brush if you really were painting with melted chocolate. You can achieve this by going to the Stroke panel and selecting Width Profile 1 in the Profile drop-down menu. This will give you lines that are thin at the ends and heavy in the middle.



STEP 08 Create a new A4 portrait CMYK document in Photoshop. Copy and paste in your original, filled text, selecting Shape Layer in the Paste dialog box. This keeps it as a vector element, making any subsequent scaling much quicker and easier to do.

Double-click on the Shape Layer's layer thumbnail in the Layers panel and change the colour to C56, M89, Y83 and K74 for that genuine chocolatey look. Name this layer 'Type'.



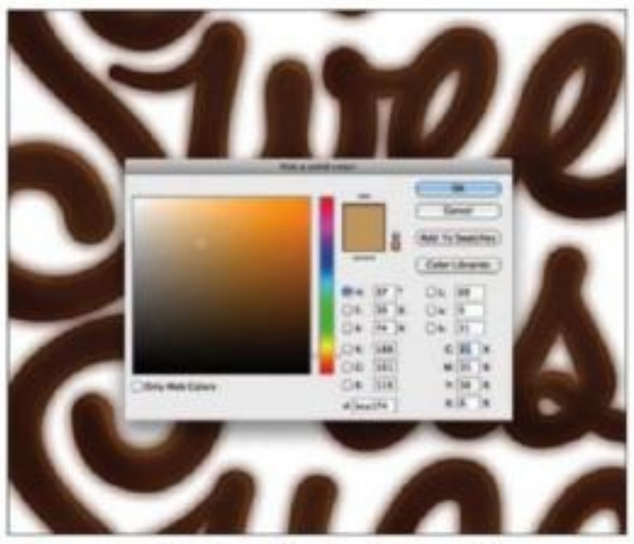
STEP 09 To give our main shape a three-dimensional look, we will use blending modes to emboss the type, along with inner shadows. Double-click on the 'Type' layer's name to bring up the Layer Style panel and set up the Bevel and Emboss and Inner Shadows effects as shown above.

STEP 10 Now we will bring in the flowing elements part of our Illustrator document. Paste it on the top of the main object and set the opacity to 30%. Change this element's colour to a dark brown to match the colour of the type behind it. Call this layer 'Flow'.

STEP 11 We'll now apply highlights to make it look as if the lighting is coming from one source in the top right. Select the Brush tool, go to the Brush Presets panel and select a Soft Round brush with opacity and flow both set to 10%, and with Shape Dynamics and Airbrush turned on. Make a selection from the 'Type' layer's vector path so any extra white doesn't show outside the letters. Create a new layer called 'Highlights' with the blending mode set to Overlay. Now brush in white highlights, remembering where the light is meant to be coming from.

BRUSHES: THE HARD OR SOFT OPTION?

It's very easy to feel you can save time by using harder brushes. In reality, using a soft brush with 10% opacity and Shape Dynamics turned on will give you more realistic-looking results. It may take you twice as long, but it in the end it will always look twice as good.



STEP 12 Next we'll need to add shadows. Select the 'Type' layer, duplicate it (**Cmd/Ctrl + J**), call the result 'Shadows' and move it to the top of the layer stack. Change its colour to C21, M35, Y56 and K6, and set the blending mode to Linear Burn (this will make all the type very dark, but don't worry as we're only applying it to the shadows).

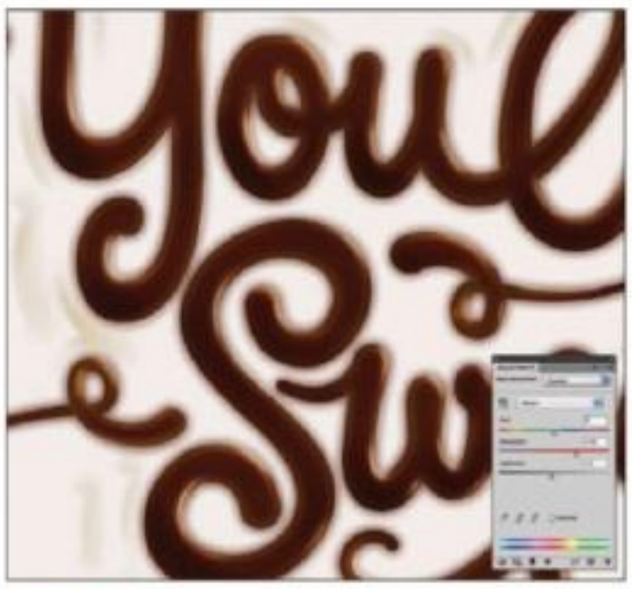
Make a selection from this layer's vector path and, using the same brush as before, take time to paint on shadows in a direction opposite to that of the highlights.

STEP 13 Pop back into Illustrator and select the main type shape. Add a 1pt white stroke and copy and paste it into Photoshop as a Smart Object. Call this layer 'Glow'. Add a white Outer Glow via the Blending Options button in the Layers panel. Create a selection around the type again and erase most of this glow, leaving the extreme highlights as white.

STEP 14 Repeat the previous step, this time with thicker line settings that will work against the shadows coming off the main type.

STEP 15 In Illustrator, create a couple of strokes offset from the main element. To do this, select the main element and hit **Object > Path > Offset Path** with a positive offset value (try 3mm). Repeat this step with an offset value double your initial one.

These two results will be used as very subtle waves in the background, as if the type had been dropped into some milk. To achieve this effect, copy and paste them into Photoshop at the base of the layer stack, change their colour to white, then use Inner Shadow and Outer Glow in the Layer Style dialog to give them the look shown.



STEP 16 Now sit back and review the whole image. I usually spend some time at this point fixing details.

For example, the colours may be good, but still not as amazing as you feel they could be. To address this, add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer at the very top of the layer stack. Set the Saturation to +40 and the Lightness to -5. This will give you a result that's look good enough to lick off a plate. ■

PROFILE RADIM MALINIC

Radim Malinic, aka Brand Nu, is an award-winning art director, illustrator and graphic designer based in London. His work is noted for its innovation, passion and attention to intricate detail. Check out his website for the latest examples from his portfolio.

CONTACT

- *brandnu.co.uk*

Above top Art for a Canadian Bacardi Breezer advertising campaign.
Above centre An ad for Cadbury – it was while he was working on alternative versions of this ad that Radim had the idea for this tutorial.
Above One of a series of abstract patterns created for the packaging of Celebrity Elite hair products.

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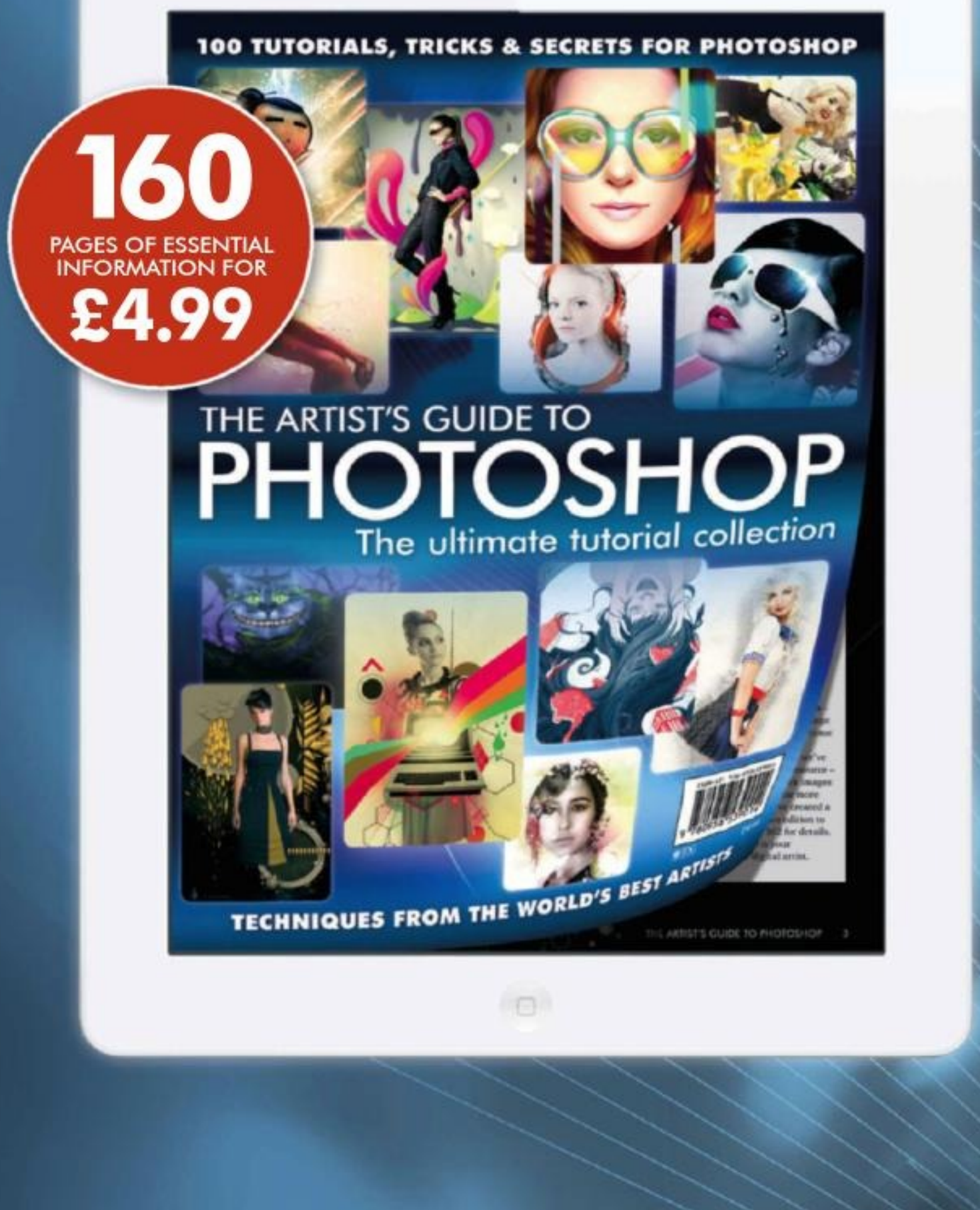
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